

LETTERS OF THE MADIAL,

AND

VISITS TO THEIR PRISONS.

The Profits will be devoted to the Madiui.

LETTERS OF THE MADIAT

AND

VISITS TO THEIR PRISONS

BY THE

MISSSES SENHOUSE.

"If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye; for the spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you: on their part he is evil-spoken of, but on your part he is glorified."—1 PETER IV. 14.

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PREFACE.

AFTER these pages had been consigned to the Publisher, a proposition, emanating from the Protestant Alliance, was made to the person entrusted with the care of passing them through the press, that the letters of the Madiai contained in this volume, should be handed over to Dr STEANE, to be added to his work, "THE MADIAI," then on the eve of publication. Being persuaded that the narrative of the visits paid by the Misses SENHOUSE formed one of the most attractive features of the MS. in his hands, he declined to give the letters apart from it ; but offered to give up the whole MS. that it might be published in one volume with Dr STEANE'S work, on the single condition that the titles of both should be combined on the title-page. This proposition was declined, on the ground that Dr Steane's pamphlet was already printed, title-page and

all. In a pecuniary point of view, the object of both volumes is the same, viz. to raise money to form a fund for the support of the Madiai. And while Dr STEANE'S contains much important information and documentary evidence, which will ensure it a wide circulation; the narrative of the Misses SENHOUSE, interspersed in this volume with the letters of the prisoners, brings the actual state of matters in Tuscany so vividly before the mind, that it is confidently anticipated the public will approve the resolution rather to publish another volume, than to consign it to oblivion.

It has been deemed right to add an Appendix, containing the Madiai's letters in the original Italian, not simply for the gratification of those readers who are acquainted with that beautiful language, but rather that it may appear evident from their style, and from the occasional errors in grammar and orthography they contain, that they have not been tampered with or changed, but are the genuine productions of persons born in the humble ranks of Italian peasantry.

THE EDITOR.

Sept. 6. 1853.

INTRODUCTORY NOTE.

THE manuscript of the following letters of two humble sufferers for the truth, and the brief notices that had been preserved of visits to their prisons, were put into my hands a short time ago by the Misses SENHOUSE, that I might give my opinion as to the propriety of making them public. I do not think there is any sufficient reason for withholding them *now*. In the good providence of God, the time has passed when their publication could do any injury to FRANCESCO and ROSA MADIAT : and to the thousands in free and happy England, whose prayers were offered up “without ceasing” for their steadfastness in the faith, and for their deliverance from the dreary cells to which an unrighteous judgment had consigned them, these letters, written in a time of suffering, and these recollections of “visits of mercy,” cannot fail to be deeply interesting. It is not often in these days that we have to record *such* cases of suffering for conscience sake : and no words can better depict the trials endured in Italian prisons for the sake of the word of God, than these unpretending letters, which preserve the very “sighings of the prisoner.” And now that the

sufferers are free, it may be permitted to other hands to set up this simple memorial to tell that "hitherto the Lord hath helped them."

It is in the earnest hope that these letters, and the brief notes that accompany them, may serve the cause of God in increasing the faith, and strengthening the hope, and quickening the love of others, that they are now made public. It is needless to say that the two *Madiari* never dreamed that any words of theirs should be deemed of so much importance, and the letters themselves but too plainly describe the circumstances in which they were written. It is not from any desire or request of theirs that their "prison words" are published; and in other circumstances it would have been unwarrantable to intrude so far on the sanctity of domestic affection, or of private friendship: but with that unassuming simplicity and singleness of eye to God's glory, which have characterised them throughout, they have left these memorials of the days of trial to the judgment of their benefactors, to be used in any way that may tend to the honour and the praise of Him who has so "kept them from falling." They have not coveted the applause of man, and if their communications to their friends and to each other are now made public, it is but right to say that it is not by their doing.

No one will expect to find literary merit of any kind in the private letters of two humble Italian prisoners; and if there be beauty and graphic power, as unquestionably there is, in some of them, let it be attributed to its true cause—the influence of the word of God in refining and elevating the minds of those

who "search the Scriptures," in which are the words of eternal life. But something far nobler *will be* found here—the expression of a faith and hope which no persecution could subdue, and the breathings of a spirit renewed in holiness by the Spirit of God.

Of one of the sufferers, these letters, I must say, convey a somewhat inadequate idea. It would be unfair to judge of FRANCESCO MADIAT by the few disjointed sentences which he was able to write in a time of shattered health and of great nervous depression. His calmness of judgment, his self-possession, his meek forgiving disposition, and his resoluteness in holding fast the truth, were beautiful throughout; though the quiet and diffident character of the Tuscan prisoner contrasted at times with the more intrepid and impetuous spirit of his Roman wife.

There is one point it is right I should notice here. The Misses SENHOUSE would have cancelled every word in these letters expressive of gratitude *to them*; but this would have been most unjust to the two Madiat, as one of the most beautiful traits of their character is their deep thankfulness to all who have shewed them kindness. Their benefactors, who have so nobly fulfilled the duty which God had given them, would not at first allow their own names to be made public; and it was with considerable hesitation that they even decided to put into the hands of others, who have been so deeply interested in the Madiat, these private notes of visits which only they and Mr CHAPMAN had the privilege of paying. It is in compliance with the urgent solicitation of their friends that their names are given now, and *that* simply for the purpose of

guarding the following pages from the suspicion which always attaches in a greater or less degree to anonymous publications ; otherwise they would have shrunk from publicity at all. But *I*, at least, may be permitted to allude to "a work of faith and labour, of love," of which the Christian Church knew little, but which was not unknown to the Church's Lord. "But when thou doest alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth : that thine alms may be in secret : and thy Father, which seeth in secret, himself shall reward thee openly." I know of no work in which two English ladies and an English gentleman could have been more gracefully and blessedly occupied, than in these visits of kindness and Christian sympathy to the prison-cells of Lucca and Volterra. It is of such that the Lord says, "I was sick, and ye visited me : I was in prison, and ye came unto me." For, "inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me." It would be idle to add one word more, for no words of man's selection could ever equal *these*.

Amid the many conflicting statements that have been published respecting the prison treatment of the Madiai, it is well that we should have such a full and exact account from an authority which none can question. And hence it has been thought right to retain sundry notices of incidents that may seem in themselves very trifling : but ROSA herself has reminded us of the interest with which Silvio Pellico watched the movements of a spider ; and those who are constantly in the busy world, or surrounded with all the comforts of this life, can scarcely form a proper estimate of what

is important to the occupant of a solitary cell. But I am very far indeed from thinking that such things need an apology : on the contrary, they enhance exceedingly the value of these notes and letters.

It had been hoped by the friends in Italy, that from the great interest which had been excited by the case of the Madiai, something more would have been done to provide for their support, now that from their shattered health they are so little able to do so themselves. To assist the fund now being raised in Britain for their support, which is not prospering as their friends could wish, the profits of this little work will be given to the two Tuscan exiles.

I need only add an expression of my sincere trust, that those who remembered the Madiai in the day of their adversity, will not forget them now in the time of their enlargement, but continue to offer up prayers on their behalf to Him who is "able to keep them from falling, and to present them faultless before the presence of His glory, with exceeding joy." Will not "the rest that remaineth" be sweeter to those who have been "wearied with the greatness of the way?"

R. MAXWELL HANNA.

FLORENCE, *June* 1853.

PRISON VISITS AND PRISON LETTERS.

It was during our séjour in Florence in the winter of 1850 and 1851, that the long slumbering fires of religious persecution, which some vainly imagined were utterly extinguished, shewed signs of continued vitality. "The unchangeable Church" then gave proof that her thunders were still ready to strike, and her lightnings to scathe, all who left her bosom to seek a purer faith. All who dared to make the Word of God their guide, their study, and their delight; all who confessed Christ as their only Intercessor and Redeemer; all, in short, who dissented from the doctrines of the Church of Rome, were considered as meet victims to be sacrificed on the altars of Papal superstition, and as just objects of its vengeance.

The events which at this time took place in Florence were of great and painful interest to us. The first lurid flash which preceded the coming storm, was seen in the most unjust expulsion from

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Tuscany of our countryman Capt Pakenham, on the accusation, which was never substantiated, of Protestant propagandism.

This event was soon followed by a government prohibition from attendance at the Swiss Protestant Church, received by many Florentines, on pain of fine and imprisonment. These illiberal and tyrannical measures produced the usual results; and the people were stimulated to examine and to study more eagerly than before, the Word of God, which they were forbidden to hear; religious reunions were secretly held for the perusal of the Bible, and converts to Protestantism increased in numbers.

On one occasion, Mons. Geymonat, a young Waldensian pastor, was discovered by the police in the act of reading the Scriptures to a few Italians: he was thrown into prison in consequence, and afterwards was sent out of the country manacled like a felon, and thus marched off from one foul dungeon to another, until he reached the frontier. Mons. Malan, also a minister of the Waldensian Church, was, on suspicion of having been guilty of the same offence, summarily expelled from Tuscany at the same time. Count Pietro Guicciardini, one of the Florentines who had received orders to abstain from further attendance at the Swiss Church, finding that he could no longer worship God according to his conscience, and having endeavoured unsuccessfully to obtain for

his co-religionists some degree of religious freedom, prepared for a voluntary expatriation. Some days before his purposed departure, he accidentally met a few converts at a friend's house, and with them he was reading the Bible, when the police entered the room, arrested them all, and escorted them to the Bargello, where they were imprisoned for ten days, and then condemned to a six months' detention in one of the prisons in the Maremma. This sentence was afterwards commuted to exile for the same length of time. Thus for the sole offence of reading the Word of God to his poorer countrymen, Count Guicciardini was banished for a time from his house and country. His whole life had been employed in doing all the good in his power to those within his influence, and even his persecutors allowed that he had ever been a true and loyal subject, and that save and except in matters of his faith, they had nothing wherewith to accuse him.

After this case, the fires of persecution blazed more and more fiercely. All who were even suspected of Protestantism, or who were known to read the Bible, were seized and thrown into prison on the charge of Apostacy or *Impietà*, by which term the Government characterises any disagreement of opinion from Popish doctrines. Amongst other victims of intolerance, were Francesco and Rosa Madiai, whom we had long known as earnest seekers after the truth. Rosa Madiai.

a Roman by birth, had lived many years in England, as upper and confidential servant in high families, by whom, for her exemplary conduct and rectitude of character, she was greatly esteemed and loved. One member of a family with whom Rosa resided for seventeen years, informed us, that during that period her attachment to her ancient faith was so openly avowed, and so well known to them, that they were all convinced, had any reproach ever been cast upon her religion, or had any attempt been made to undermine her opinions, great as was her attachment to the family, she would instantly have resigned her situation, and have left them.

Francesco Madiari was the son of a yeoman, or small landed proprietor, in the neighbourhood of Florence. He acted as courier to many families, and he also was greatly esteemed by his employers. His allegiance to the Roman Catholic Church was somewhat shaken in early life by the harsh treatment of his confessor, to whom on one occasion he confessed that he had eaten meat during Lent, in compliance with his doctor's advice, under whose medical care he then was. The priest received this confession with a burst of furious invective, and brutally told him "that for this offence he was damned in body and soul." He then turned from, and left him in a rage—unpardoned and unabsolved. For some time afterwards, Francesco declares, in his own simple

way, "that he scarcely knew of what religion he was; that he still attended the services of the Romish Church, but felt as if he was not satisfactorily performing his Christian duties."

He soon after went to America, on a visit to his brother, who had married an American Episcopalian. He then received a few lessons in English, and began to read the English prayer book, and although, as he says himself, "he understood with difficulty the language, he yet felt his spirit somewhat calmed and comforted." He accompanied his sister-in-law occasionally to the Episcopalian Church at Boston, and once received there the holy communion; he also read a little in the English Bible, but he says, "he was still in much darkness as to spiritual truth."

He returned to Florence, and was shortly afterwards engaged as courier by an English family, in whose service was also Rosina Pulini, who afterwards became his wife. As she understood English, he persuaded her to read to him every evening, a chapter in the Bible, and to explain it to him in Italian, as at that period there were no Italian Bibles in circulation. He frequently expressed the great delight he experienced in hearing, for the first time, the Word of God expounded to him in his own language. They afterwards retired from service, married, and kept furnished apartments in Florence, which were frequently occupied by English families.

At this time they were still members of the Roman Catholic Church, but they became so disgusted by the careless and scandalous manner of performing religious worship, by the open and shameless profligacy of the priests, and by the blind superstitions of the people, that they began prayerfully and earnestly to read and "search the Scriptures," in order to examine into these matters of faith for themselves; their eyes were thus gradually opened, and they saw the glaring errors and delusions of the Romish religion, which they finally abjured. They attended divine service at the Swiss Church as long as they were able to do so; when all places of Protestant worship were closed to them, they assembled with their brethren in the faith in an "upper room," there to read and study the Scriptures, to pray to God, and to praise him. Their lives and conversation were so blameless, that even their accusers were unable to establish any charge against their moral and social conduct. They were remarkably true and just in all their dealings, generous and charitable to the poor, ready to forgive, grateful for kindness, loyal to their earthly sovereign, and devoted and faithful subjects to the King of kings. Thus were they bright examples to all around them; but their good and attractive qualities did not touch the hearts or influence the judgment of their enemies. The sole crime of apostacy from the faith of Rome overweighed all other

considerations ; indeed, their unimpeachable characters rather increased the bitter malice of their accusers, as it made more evident their unjustifiable treatment of them, and so cast an additional odium on their persecuting church.

A few months after Count Guicciardini's expulsion, the Madiai were arrested and thrown into prison. The particulars of their arrest are given in the "Prisoners of Hope." * From the perilous circumstances which threatened the Madiai when they abandoned the powerful and dominant Church of Rome, and joined the small band of persecuted Protestant converts, they might, one would have thought, have been secured from any charge of having been influenced to do so by unworthy motives ; but the voice of defamation was not silent on this occasion, and the envenomed shaft of calumny was launched against them : it hurt them not however, but fell harmlessly at their feet. At the time of their trial, Rosa Madiai boldly and most unanswerably refuted this charge. "Had we," she said, "been influenced to change our religion by interested reasons, we should have done so when we were residing for so many years in a Protestant country and in Protestant families."

When from conviction they did leave the Roman Catholic Church, they well knew the dangers

* Also in Rev. Dr Steane's new work entitled, "Narrative of the Recent Persecutions in Tuscany."

they incurred: they were aware that "bonds and imprisonment might await them; but these things did not move them,—they counted the cost, and chose that better part which could not be taken from them,—they took up the cross and followed Jesus!" Their consequent deprivations came not upon them slowly and by degrees, but at once their most tender ties were rent asunder, and in a moment they were called upon to renounce every earthly blessing. Their happy home was suddenly exchanged for the solitary captive's cell—the healthy and refreshing air and light of liberty, for the unwholesome and offensive atmosphere of a gloomy prison. In place of the valued companionship of friends with whom they had taken "sweet counsel," their society consisted of blaspheming jailers; instead of listening to the reading of the scriptures and to psalms of praise, their ears were offended and their hearts pained by the groans and maledictions of despairing criminals: they endured all the miseries attendant upon solitary imprisonment without experiencing its quiet and tranquillity. These afflictions they had to bear, not for a few days or even weeks, but for *nineteen months*, during which time the encouraging voice of human sympathy only occasionally reached them, and then under much restriction; only *once* during that time were they permitted to see their spiritual pastor, and even then he was not allowed to administer to them

the comforting ordinance of the Lord's Supper. In addition to these trials, they both suffered from severe bodily illness, and from a continued and wearing anxiety respecting each other's state of health. That they were not overwhelmed by so much suffering, is an evidence that the God in whom they trusted never forsook them, and that "underneath them were the everlasting arms."

They were imprisoned ten months before trial : during that time they were only once, at the request of the English Chargé d'Affaires, Mr Scarlett, permitted to see each other for a few minutes in the presence of jailers; and when we returned to Florence, three months after their arrest, they had never been allowed to see or to hold communication with their friends, and all books had been taken from them. We determined to gain access to them, and accordingly, in conjunction with two friends, Miss Grant, and the Rev. T. Hamilton, we obtained with great difficulty a government order to see the two prisoners once a-week in the presence of their respective jailers. It was with deep feelings of thankfulness that we received our tickets of admission into the prisons of the "*Conjugi Madiati, detenuti per Empietà.*" We hastened to the Bargello, and with much emotion we entered the gloomy but highly picturesque cortile of the ancient palace of the magistrates of the Republic. We paused not then to look around at the singular ornaments and stone-

cut armorial bearings with which the exterior walls are covered. There are few edifices which so impressively tell their own tale of mysterious and cruel import, and it required no great stretch of imagination to feel assured, when looking at this portentous building, that dark deeds of infamy and cruelty had been, and still were committed within its walls.

We hastily ascended the outside stairs and reached the iron gate at the summit. When passing under the gloomy portal, the Tuscan poet's well-known inscription, "*Lasciate ogni speranza voi ch' entrate*,"* came instantly to our recollection: it was to such an entrance singularly appropriate. Through this gate we passed on at once to the interior of the Bargello. "The secrets of the prison-house" were soon partially revealed to us. In the hall of entrance were groups of melancholy-looking persons of all grades, friends and relatives of the unfortunate prisoners. Many were in tears, and all looked sad and wretched. Some of them had been to visit their imprisoned friends, others had brought their dinners. All prisoners in the Bargello are allowed previous to trial to have their food supplied to them by their families, an economical arrangement on the part of the authorities, who encourage the indulgence of the privilege by furnishing food of such a repulsive quality to the prisoners, that all, even

the lowest criminals who have any friends, are supplied from without.

By the jailers we were conducted through gloomy passages, and up long flights of stairs, to the Director or Governor's room. On our way there, we passed numerous low iron doors of about four feet in height, which we were told closed the places of confinement for the more desperate criminals:—they were more like dens for wild beasts, than cells for human beings. We found the director in a more cheerful-looking room than we could have expected in such a building. He greeted us with civility, and requested us to be seated until the arrival of the prisoner, Rosa Madiari, whom we were to see in his presence.

After ten minutes' anxious waiting, the door opened, and our dear friend was ushered into the room, guarded by a male and female jailer. We all instantly rose and most tenderly embraced her; we were delighted to pay to this christian heroine in the presence of her keepers, every demonstration of heart-felt homage and respect.

Her female attendant was remarkably repulsive; filthy in her person, and slipshod; her long uncombed hair streaming over her savage countenance; wolf-eyed and gaunt; she was the very personification of all cruelty, and of all vileness. She watched every movement of her prisoner with suspicious ferocity. We were sad to think

that the sensitive and refined Rosa Madiai should be placed under such a keeper; even the Governor seemed disgusted with her presence, and he ordered her to leave the room, a command which the virago obeyed with reluctance. Rosa Madiai during the whole of this affecting interview preserved a perfect composure; she stooped, and looked very ill and worn, but she spoke of her trials with great resignation, and earnestly entreated us to pray for her that she might not by any weakness of her's, injure the holy cause for which she was suffering. She spoke openly and without reservation religious subjects; the Director never interrupted our conversation, he was employed in writing, and I suspected he might be taking notes of what was said during this interview, but of this I was not sure. We remained an hour with our dear prisoner, and when we rose to leave her, she with her usual courtesy accompanied us to the door,—alas! she could not go further, the Director hastily desired her to wait until her keeper was summoned to conduct her back to her cell. We saw Francesco the following day: he entered the room with a smiling and happy countenance, and expressed much pleasure on seeing us. He declared himself happy at the honour put on him to suffer for righteousness' sake, and professed the most absolute resignation to the will of God, whatever that might be, whether to suffer torture or death.

Soon after these interviews, we heard that Rosa Madiai was extremely and dangerously ill. We applied immediately for leave to see her. We were at first positively refused, as it is against their prison rules to admit visitors into the cells of the prisoners, and she was too ill to leave her bed and receive us as usual in the Director's room. Our earnest importunities, however, at length prevailed, and we gained admission to the invalid's wretched cell. It was situated under the roof, and consequently was extremely hot in summer, and as severely cold and damp in winter; it swarmed, moreover, with loathsome vermin, which destroyed her rest at night, and tormented and disgusted her during the day by crawling over her person in numbers. We found her very ill and weak, she was also somewhat dispirited, and lamented that she could not rejoice in her sufferings as St Paul had done, and she frequently exclaimed, "the spirit is quite willing, but the flesh is very, very weak." She expressed to us in touching language, her sad feeling of this a few days before she had thought herself dying, and knew that neither her husband, who was in the same prison, nor any earthly friend could see her, and that jailers only would be with her to close her eyes. For these female jailers she justly entertained a strong repugnance; she complained greatly of their blasphemous language and evil conversation, and she

told us she was glad sometimes to purchase their silence by giving them a portion of her dinner: We saw her again a few days afterwards: she was still in her cell, but was better, and in improved spirits. She had received a visit from our *Chargé d’Affaires*, Mr Scarlett. The day *before* his interview with her, her cell had been cleaned and whitewashed !

On leaving the prison we were frequently accosted by persons unknown to us, who whispered to us their earnest inquiries after the imprisoned Madiai, and on one occasion as we were waiting in the Director’s room previous to Rosa’s entrance, a respectable-looking prisoner, who had been brought there to see his relatives, took advantage of the momentary absence of his jailer to approach us eagerly, to beg us to tell La Signora Madiai that her husband was quite well, and *very firm*. He told us he was a political prisoner, and had not then been tried, though he had been nearly three years in prison ! So much for the vaunted humanity of the Tuscan laws.

Whilst waiting for Rosa, we have fortunately noticed at the window of a cell opposite, a young and rather interesting-looking prisoner watching us. Our curiosity was excited, and before the arrival of the jailers we always approached the window to observe the prisoner, whom we generally found at his post, looking very sad and dispirited. We endeavoured in vain to find out

who he was, and for what offence he was imprisoned; the jailers either could not, or would not, ever give us any information respecting the prisoners. At last our acquaintance was no longer visible, and we were speculating on his fate about a fortnight after his disappearance, when our drawing-room door was opened, and in came our incognito,* who, when he saw us, exclaimed, "I was right, I thought you were the ladies whom I saw from my cell." It appeared that he was a young medical practitioner, and that four months before he had been arrested by the police whilst in attendance on the sick bed of a convert, on the charge of having endeavoured to induce him to change his faith. He was taken to the Bargello, where he made a bold confession, as did also an old man, who was kindly nursing the invalid, and who was arrested with the doctor on suspicion of having been guilty of a like offence. After four months' imprisonment they were sentenced *without trial*, the old man to perpetual exile, and the doctor to a further incarceration in one of the prisons of the Maremma. He was accordingly sent off to Piombino in chains, but in the course of a fortnight his friends obtained a commutation of his sentence to exile; permission was given to him to spend three days in Florence

* Dr Mazinghi, afterwards imprisoned at Sarzana for Protestant propagandism, tried and condemned at Genoa, and immediately pardoned by the King of Sardinia.

previous to his departure, and it was during that time that he came to see us.

In November, Francesco Madiari was removed from the Bargello to the Murate. The Murate is a new prison, and it looked so much more cheerful than the Bargello, that we congratulated him on the change. He shook his head, and said, that the rules there were much more severe, and that the silence was more unbroken; that in the Bargello he could look out of his window into the court beneath, where people were constantly passing, but that from the situation and construction of his present window, he had no view.

On one occasion, we copied for him some of his favourite psalms, which as usual we gave to the Director for inspection; on our next visit they were returned to us, with the remark, that "*scritti profani*" (profane writings) were inadmissible! Portions of the Roman Catholic Bible *with notes*, and a few religious books were at this time permitted; but after their sentence, all save the Roman Catholic Bible were withdrawn. Francesco one day told us, that he had been thinking of a story he had once read of a person who, for heresy, had been condemned to ride through his native town on an ass. "Now, were they to make me do so," he said, laughingly, "I should, for such a crime, feel no shame or disgrace: I should sing psalms and praise God."

Soon after his incarceration in the Murate, his

nervous system evidently became shaken, and from that time his naturally robust health began to fail, and a short time before his removal to Volterra, it completely gave way. His sufferings from his first imprisonment at Volterra until the hour of his liberation were most severe. Few persons have any idea of the extremity of his afflictions both of mind and body, but as his sorrows increased, "so did grace abound." In the furnace of trial his simple, childlike faith became brighter and brighter, and its chastened and holy light illumined even to its close the otherwise long and dreary night of his captivity. Every fresh sacrifice which Madiai was called upon to make in maintenance of the truth, was rendered up by him, not grudgingly nor unwillingly, but with joy and thanksgiving, and having done all, he counted himself still an unprofitable servant. Submissive and resigned to his heavenly Father's will, Francesco Madiai was also meek and gentle to his keepers ; but when called upon to confess or to defend his faith, no hero on the battle-field, or martyr at the stake, ever shewed more unflinching resolution, or a more perfect self-devotion.

In all our interviews with Francesco Madiai in the Bargello and the Murate, we never found him utterly depressed, nor his faith in the least degree wavering. He generally received us with smiles and gladness : his joy and grace in believing were

never deadened, he truly "rejoiced evermore." The sweetness and patience of his demeanour touched even the cold, hard hearts of his jailers, who repeatedly said to us, "Oh that all our prisoners were like Francesco Madiai, as tractable and good!" He often declared to us his readiness to die in prison rather than recant and return to an idolatrous worship, and he expressed his confident persuasion that God would never leave nor forsake him. Rosa's faith was as firm as her husband's, but her naturally more nervous and sensitive temperament, and her unselfish solicitude on his account, caused her spirits sometimes to droop; but by divine aid she was strengthened again and again to triumph over the weakness and infirmities of the flesh, and finally she was enabled to "fight the good fight of faith" with indomitable courage and success.

After a detention of eight months in prison, the day for their trial was fixed for the 21st of April 1852. We thought ourselves fortunate in securing seats in the Tribunal at nine in the morning of that day. Until three o'clock we there waited with nervous anxiety for the arrival of the judges and prisoners. We were at last informed, that in consequence of the illness of one of the witnesses, for the prosecution, the cause could not come on that day, and as by this delay the Madiai had lost their turn on the roll of causes, that their trial might not take place for two

months to come. The Madiai were brought from their respective prisons at an early hour, and were placed in separate rooms, foul and airless, where, surrounded by gendarmes, they were detained until three o'clock, waiting for their summons to the trial. We were not allowed to see them, nor could any one do so save their lawyer. The poor prisoners, after having been buoyed up by the hope that their deliverance was at hand, or at least, that their fate was shortly to be decided, were conducted back for an indefinite time to their gloomy cells, which they had fondly imagined they were about to leave for ever.

We saw them both on the day following, and although Rosa, who was very ill, was somewhat cast down, she exclaimed with the most touching submission, as did her husband afterwards, "La volontà di Dio sia fatta!"

During the time of their detention at the Courts, Francesco was placed in the same cell with Casacci, who some months before had been arrested on the charge of possessing a Bible, and of having induced his child to read it. His wife, *in confession*, had revealed this grave fact, which caused his immediate arrest! Unhappily for the prisoner Casacci, his advocate had prevailed upon him, in order to obtain his freedom, to recant and to declare himself a true son of the Roman Catholic Church. The lawyer, when remonstrated with for having given such unprincipled advice to his client, coolly

replied, "I have high authority for it, our great saint, St Peter, denied his Master!" Francesco who had previously known Casacci, employed a portion of the time when they were together, in remonstrating with him on his cowardice and sin in not making a bold confession of his faith: he repeated to him his favourite Psalm (the 116th) and spoke earnestly and faithfully to him. Casacci although at the time much moved, and affected even to tears by Madiai's reproofs, was not induced by them to change his course. Shortly after the trial he was liberated; he was treated by all his acquaintance with merited contempt and pity. His cowardly and abject bearing, and his unhappy countenance during his trial, formed striking contrast to the respectful firmness, and calm composure of the Madiai, who were tried at the same time.

Rosa, when driving from the Bargello to the Tribunal, asked the gendarmes who accompanied her, whether they had been desired to take her through the bye streets of the town; that if they had received no orders to that effect, but were actuated by compassion to her, she begged to assure them that she had no objection to be driven through the heart of Florence, as she had no cause to be ashamed of her situation, and had "*no mark on her forehead.*"

We were greatly distressed by the postponement of the trial, as we were on the eve of de-

parture for England, and we had fully expected to have left our friends in liberty ; however, we still confidently believed that they would soon be free, and therefore took leave of them under this cheerful, but erroneous impression. To each of our party the grateful Madiai presented a little memento. Rosa, with her usual good taste, considered that these presents would be made more interesting to us if given in prison, and she employed (we suppose) the jailers to execute for them this commission ; if so, those worthies deserved more credit for their taste, than we should have felt inclined to bestow upon them ; be that as it might, never were presents more highly valued.

Our sanguine hopes for our friends' liberation, did not overcome our feelings of regret at leaving them still in bonds. Happily our places were more than adequately filled up to them by our good friend Mr Chapman, who at this time applied for and providentially obtained leave to visit the prisoners, and ever after he proved himself their kind and devoted friend. From delicacy to the feelings of Mr Chapman, and in compliance with his injunctions, we are prevented from expatiating more fully on his devotedness to the suffering Madiai, whom in prison and out of prison he served, and does serve still with unwearied zeal and love. The following letters of the prisoners, shew the nature and the extent of those services in their behalf, and express also their full estima-

tion of them, and their grateful feelings towards their kind friend and benefactor.

We were greatly shocked when in England to hear of their unjust trial, and their atrocious sentence. Francesco was condemned to fifty-six months' "lavoro forzato" (hard labour) in the prison at Volterra, and Rosa to forty-five months' imprisonment in the Ergastolo at Lucca!

After ten months' imprisonment, the Madiai were at last summoned to their trial—prejudged, and predoomed, they underwent the solemn mockery of an open trial. Most of the false witnesses against them had been the recipients of their bounty, and had for years been fed and clothed by them: bribes and threats had been too successfully employed in gaining their evidence against their benefactors. The Government prosecutor was obliged to wrench from their original meaning old and obsolete laws, in a vain endeavour to give some colouring of justice to the atrocious sentence which he demanded against them. The judges treated the prisoners with an unmanly ferocity, which in these days is happily of rare occurrence. When the Madiai attempted to defend themselves, or their religion, from false imputations, the presiding judge shouted, "*Silence; it is not permitted you to speak of your religion before a Roman Catholic audience!*" Betrayed, insulted, wronged, these noble confessors endured all with extraordinary patience and composure,

and they heard their terrible sentence with dignified firmness. They embraced each other in silence, and were by the guards led away separately to undergo their doom.

One gleam of hope still remained to cheer the hearts of the Madiai and their friends,—the royal prerogative of mercy might yet be exercised in their favour. Their Sovereign, against whom, in all their sufferings, they had never uttered one word of disrespect or complaint, could still reverse their doom, and by a tardy act of justice, set them free. But, alas! the Prince who had the lives and liberties of his people at his disposal, was himself subject to a cruel task-master, and was under the absolute domination of Papal Rome. Acting under this evil influence, he turned a deaf ear to the petitions of the captive Madiai, and refused with discourteous harshness all subsequent appeals made for their liberation by every Protestant power in Europe. But “the Lord reigneth,” and in his own appointed time, the prison doors were opened. The Tuscan rulers who hearkened not to the cries of mercy, or to the claims of justice, ultimately became more impressible by the abject influences of shame and fear; of shame at the condemnation which their unhallowed cruelty received from all good men of every creed, and of fear at the consequences which such universal reprobation might bring upon them. The prisoners were unexpectedly and ignominiously thrust forth, and driven out of Tuscany.

Let us, however, in this imitate the example of the Madiai, who, in the darkest hour of their affliction, "blessed their enemies, and prayed for them which despitefully used them and persecuted them."

Notwithstanding the rejection of all appeals made in favour of the Madiai immediately after their trial, their friends did not expect so prompt and sudden an execution of their sentence. Our good friend Mr Chapman was surprised by a summons from Rosa, conveyed by one of the jail officers, who informed him that she was about to start for Lucca. He hastened to the Bargello, where he found Rosa, as he describes her, "quite the Christian heroine, ready armed for her coming trials; there being no longer any uncertainty as to her fate to cause her spirits to fluctuate between hope and fear, she wisely prepared for the worst, and turned to her strongholds." She prayed earnestly for strength and help, and she obtained them; calm and collected, she left sundry kind messages for her friends, and gave words of strong encouragement for her brethren and sisters in the faith, that they should not be intimidated by what had befallen herself and her husband, but should, at all cost, boldly "confess Christ before all men." Mr Chapman handed this noble woman into the carriage, and, guarded by a male and female jailer, she thus proceeded to the Ergastolo, the place of punishment for the

vilest criminals, and for the most depraved of her own sex!

Mr Chapman, accompanied by the Madiati's advocate, Signor Maggiorani, their able and intrepid defender, went to the Murate; they found Francesco perfectly calm and resigned. He asked to be allowed to take a few shirts with him, but was refused; and he meekly replied,—“All things according to the will of God.” He was taken to Pontedera by railway, and was there manacled and conveyed to Volterra *en voiture*. He was ill before he left the Murate, and became much worse afterwards. Immediately on hearing of his indisposition, Mr Chapman, with his usual promptness, set off to Volterra. Francesco received him with much affection and great emotion—he was overjoyed to see his kind friend. Mr Chapman found him in so wretched a dungeon that he was obliged to inform the governor, that should Francesco be detained there he did not think he could survive many weeks; he was consequently removed to a less-objectionable room, and finally was placed in one of the infirmary cells, which was more airy and cheerful. Happily for Francesco's comfort, he never again recovered his health sufficiently to be taken off the sick list, and, *owing to this circumstance*, he retained his more healthy cell, and had also the benefit of hospital fare.

Rosa was conveyed *en voiture* to her new pri-

son, accompanied by her guards. Instead of taking her at once to Lucca, a day's journey from Florence, they halted for the night at Pistoja, where she was placed in a loathsome cell in the common prison; the food given to her was so repulsive that she could not eat it, fortunately she had put a crust of bread in her pocket, which, with a glass of water, refreshed her harassed frame. The gendarmes had been ordered to proceed with their prisoner to Lucca at three o'clock in the morning, but she was so unwell that she was unable to set off at so early an hour. She was humanely received by the Director of the prison at Lucca, and also by the Sisters of Charity, who have the care of the female prisoners in the Ergastolo; they were all as humane to her as the strict rules of the prison permitted.

In our subsequent visits to the prison we ever experienced from the Director and the Sisters the most courteous treatment, and we always found great willingness on their part to ameliorate, *as far as they dared*, the unhappy condition of the imprisoned heretic! When she first arrived, the diet given to her was so disgusting that hunger only compelled her to swallow it. She became ill, and the doctor placed her on the sick list, and she had in consequence hospital fare, which, although very meagre, was more palatable; and her friends afterwards were per-

mitted, through the kindness of the Director, occasionally to supply her with better diet.

A short time after Rosa's imprisonment in the Ergastolo, the Dowager Grand Duchess of Tuscany went to see her. It was natural to expect that the royal lady's visit would bring liberty to the captive, or at least some amelioration of her punishment. Woman rarely enters the abode of misery uninfluenced by a compassionate intention to do good; she seldom witnesses sorrow, even in the most worthless of her species, without making some effort to alleviate or remove it, but even woman's sympathising and loving nature, when placed under the baneful influence of Papal bigotry, becomes cold, pitiless, and cruel! A few days after the royal visit the full rigour of Rosa's sentence was carried out,—she suffered the last indignity which she was called upon to endure, her hair was cut off, and she was clothed in the felon's dress!

The Archbishop of Lucca paid his first visit to Rosa about the same time. He was affable and gracious, and on taking leave, he begged her "*to pray for him.*" A dignitary of the Papal Church requesting the prayers of a heretic then undergoing punishment for her apostacy from his Church! Surely the "*Illustrissimo Arcivescovo*" said this in pleasant mockery, somewhat ill-timed certainly; or he might imagine that a little flattery from so august a personage

would dazzle the imagination, and weaken the judgment of this wandering member of his flock, who might thus be lured back again to his fold. Alas! he little knew the nature of her faith, which, resting solely on the Rock of ages, remained unmoved by the threats of the powerful, or by the blandishments of the most exalted.

The many contradictory reports concerning the prison treatment of the Madiai will finally be set to rest by the accompanying letters of Rosa Madiai, some of which contain graphic descriptions of the secret horrors of her prison.

Many of her letters give unmistakable evidence of the noble qualities possessed by the writer,—perhaps none of them shone forth more conspicuously in her prison life than did her generous compassion for the sorrows of her fellow-creatures. Heavy trials and severe sickness too often make the sufferer's heart selfish and morose: not so that of Rosa Madiai. Whatever might be her own mental or bodily anguish at the time, when she was told of the wrongs or the sorrows of any human being, known or unknown, the colour would mount in her pallid cheek, and the tears of sympathy would spring to her eyes, and she would exclaim,—“Were I out of prison, how gladly would I have helped them.”

Never did her sensibilities and compassionate

feelings appear more active than when her own trials had made her the object of wide-spread solicitude.

The famishing infant,—the despairing murderess, who in the Bargello for days and nights distressed her by her cries and groans,—the dying criminal, and the raving maniac, in the Ergastolo,—all and each of these miserable beings called forth Rosa Madiai's deepest sympathy and solicitude, and to each was she enabled to administer succour, comfort, or consolation. When she witnessed cruelty or injustice towards her unhappy fellow-prisoners, she boldly, and at all risks, stood forth as their champion, for, as she was tender-hearted and feeling, so was she remarkably sincere and true, neither the re-acquisition of liberty, nor the preservation of life itself, would ever have induced her to appear to be what she was not. To these noble characteristics were added a refined mind, a bright intelligence, good judgment, and a tender and grateful heart.

Her husband's guileless, simple, and affectionate nature was equally engaging. These natural attractions of the Madiai were made still more lovely by the graces of the Spirit, which they possessed in most rich abundance. Who can wonder that these confessors, endowed with such rare excellencies, should have won the affection and esteem of all who were privileged to see them under their extraordinary trials and suffer-

ings? To those who have been so highly favoured, these "prison visits" will ever be the green and pleasant spots, the oasis to which their memories may turn and be refreshed, should every other landmark in their earthly pilgrimage become withered or destroyed.

LETTER from ROSA to a Friend, written soon after her arrival at Lucca.

Cell 36, Ergastolo, 8th Sept. 1852.

MY DEAR FRIEND.—The state in which I am told you are, alone, and without friends to comfort you, in your many hours of sorrow, obliges me to write to you ; otherwise, neither my head, nor my hand, would have allowed me to send you these few lines, which, I write on my knees, for want of other convenience. On my first arrival here, I was told that, in order to give me a better cell, they had removed one of the prisoners; in fact, the cell was of a tolerable size, with an iron-barred window, which was of such a height as to require a long pole, with an iron-fork, to open and shut it, but it admitted good air, and my sorrow was somewhat comforted by it, but I feared that something worse was in store for me. This was on Thursday. There was given to me a plate of cabbage and beans, water, and a piece of bread, about the value of three farthings ;—in the evening, I had bread and water. The next morning, feeling very faint for want of food, as my stomach was too weak to eat, and having also fever, caused by so much suffering, I prayed them to give me a cup of coffee ;—I was told, that was not permitted, but seeing my great weakness,

they said they would make for me some pottage : and they brought me grated bread thickened with oil, which I loathed, but my great exhaustion obliged me to take at least as much of it as I could swallow. I asked them if they would be kind enough to make it in future with butter ; they told me, that butter they never used ; at last, I saw the doctor, and he put me on *mézzo vitto* (half diet). I find it sufficient, and I know not for how long I shall have it, since my food ought to be *maigre* for six days, either dried salt-fish, or beans, or potatoes, with oil, &c. Sundays, broth with boiled meat, and a glass of wine. My poor husband will have the same fare, but what distresses me more, is, that for two months, he has been very ill. My dear friend, pray earnestly to God to enable us to honour, and to bless him from our hearts, in the state in which he has been pleased to place us:—the spirit is willing, but the flesh is sadly rebellious ; I feel more for my husband than for myself. I am making shirts for the prisoners, but my husband has no employment, and is always in the same unwholesome prison ! They tell me he has a window in his cell, but when it rains, or is cold, both door and window are closed ! Oh ! no one can imagine the sufferings of a prisoner, who has not experienced them.

I now continue my history. When I took possession of the above-named cell, besides other

inconveniences, which I have already mentioned, there were under my room two girls of bad conduct, whose violence, and evil dispositions, rendered strait-waistcoats and irons necessary; night and day they shouted, wept, blasphemed, and used language which horrified me. Afterwards, a third was placed with them, so that the male prisoners, three hundred in number, who were close to us, were obliged to desire them to be silent; and when their irons were removed, their blows and kicks against the door resounded through the prison, and they finished by spitting in the faces of the nuns! But this was not all. There was also a madman near to me, who wept incessantly. During the night, the men's court, which is beneath our rooms, was visited, and we heard the terrible clank of keys and bolts and the opening and shutting of the doors; and every quarter of an hour the sentinels were obliged to shew that they were on the watch, by loud shouts, which were answered in the same way, by the other sentinels, until daybreak. After the lapse of a few days, I was placed in a worse room, in the prison of the Ergastolo. My cell is more confined, the ceiling is lower, and the window higher and half-covered by blinds, they say, to prevent our seeing the men below, but even a cat could not see out. A small round seat is in one corner of the room, and to prevent its being placed where one wishes, it is fixed by a chain close to the window,

but the window is too high to give any comfort. There is also a footstool, on which I am now seated, writing on the bed-stead, but even that is chained, and cannot be moved, and if when seated, I wish to rest my legs, the chains prevent me ; the bed also is chained to the floor ; in short, they have studied to render the unfortunates miserable in every possible way. From the situation of my cell, the odours which pervade it night and day are horrible ; bad words, are my companions, which are heard from the prisoners, who are in the yard. A weaver's loom is close to my cell, which is at work from six in the morning till the evening, and in the winter, till nine at night ; another loom is opposite to me, and a third, seven doors from my cell ;—but it is better that I should cease describing this most miserable place.

I have just received a letter from my husband, who tells me he is in the infirmary. This proves to me that he is still ill. God give us strength to bow the head even to the dust, and say, “Thy will be done !” Each day afflictions increase : O God, increase our faith, and our obedience, and may thy will be fully accomplished by thy prisoners ; let the devil tire of tormenting us, but never, never let us weary of loving and blessing thee ! My dear Margaret, I fear that instead of consoling you, as I had wished to do, I may have added trouble to trouble ; oh pardon me, my dear, I ought to have spoken of your

affairs, and I have instead, written only of my own. Tell all to pray much for us, that God may be ever glorified. My dear friend, I hope that our good God may soon console you, and cause you to find some situation out of our miserable country. Ah, we may say with Jeremiah, "Oh that my eyes were a fountain of tears, to weep day and night for the daughters of Italy." My dear friend, you may, if you wish it, write to me, but remember, that the letters pass through many hands, so merely sign them MARGARET, that will be enough to make me understand that they come from you. Adieu, I hope that this will find you in good health; I, thank God, am tolerably well. Salute all our friends, tell them I love them, in the love of Jesus Christ, let them not be discouraged.

ROSA MADIAL.

FROM ROSA TO A FRIEND.

*Ergastolo, Lucca.**

MY DEAR FRIEND,—I write to you while deafened by the shouts of the guards, who every quarter of an hour cry aloud, just as do the venders of handkerchiefs at the fair. I am not surprised

* This letter is without date. It must have been written, however, during the month of January last, as in the course of it she states that seventeen months had been completed since their first imprisonment. It is placed here, rather than in its chronological order, because it describes, like the preceding letter, Rosa's prison and its inmates.

at them, for they are uneducated, but I wonder at the authorities; it is right that the sentinels should give proofs of their watchfulness, but let it be done as if we were Christians and not wild beasts. Moreover, two weavers are at work, and the noise they make is tremendous in the silence of the night; and there would have been four, had not two been ill. Added to this, a woman, manacled hands and feet, who has on a strait-waistcoat and is bound to a bench without a mattress under her, is shrieking dreadfully to-day,—her fare is bread and water. She is one of the three whom I found here on my arrival, and is thoroughly bad, though only eighteen years of age! Such scenes are often repeated. Since I changed my cell, I have been rather more quiet; but unfortunately, yesterday, an unhappy and exceedingly depraved creature was put in the opposite cell, who, ever since her arrival, has shouted, cried, and declared, that the devil was at her back; to-day, to the destruction of my brain, she is singing songs about the tribunal of the Ergastolo, and often blaspheming the adorable name of God. The nuns entreat me to have patience, as for the moment, they know not where else to place her. I said, Poor unhappy souls! they are not to be blamed; but those are, who, negligent of the sacred teaching, have left the inhabitants of the towns and villages ignorant of a Christian life,—they can neither read

nor write, and are as the beasts. Now, all lament this, but who is to blame? We are like Sodom and Gomorrah, but woe to our rulers! Some have already gone to their great account, and all must follow them. Oh! my dear friend, if you knew what places these are? I only mention these things to shew you to what I have been sentenced by the Government; but God wills it thus, then let it be so for the glory of his name. I thought I knew Italy, but I knew it not until I entered prison.—Good night! I return to my letter for a few moments only, as I expect some one soon to rub my back, which is so weak that I cannot walk twenty minutes.

My screamer is quieter, but still shouts so that I wonder she does not lose her breath. Yesterday she broke her chains and hid them, and when the nuns went to her, she said the devil had loosed her; they sought in vain for the chains, which they imagined the devil must also have taken away. A gendarme came to manacle her anew, and afterwards searched for the chains, which (with I believe the help of a ladder) he at length discovered hanging outside the window where the *diavolèssa* had placed them; the height was so great that though a cat might have jumped down from it, it never could have climbed up. My dear Friend, I have just received news of my afflicted husband, and God alone knows what grief his illness causes me,—

alone—imprisoned—his wife unable to see or to visit him—without a human being to comfort him day or night! he may have a good doctor and honest men about him, but I know what the horrible solitude of a prison is with its door eternally closed! The day after to-morrow, seventeen months will have passed since that fatal hour! O, my God! if this be for thy glory, sanctify to us this heavy affliction, and sustain us, so that we fall not under its overwhelming weight. Miserable humanity, what art thou? If they would set my husband free and leave me here, although I abhor prison, I would thank my God for letting him breathe that air which even the birds enjoy, while he and I are deprived of it. Pardon me, my God, but my afflictions surpass my strength, oh, grant me help! In the night, the unhappy woman opposite howled like a wolf for two hours, and then she sang. I might be in a madhouse. However, to-morrow she goes away. I will leave you now, not that I feel inclined to sleep or to pray, but I must try to do both.—Good night.

16th, Sunday.—My dear Friend, I wrote to my husband on Friday, and told him of your troubles, which will grieve him, but neither he nor I can offer you any consolation; we are, as it were, buried. Oh, if you knew how much I suffer in your past afflictions, as I still do, at

not being near, "to weep (as St Paul says) with those that weep." But God has decided otherwise, and truly he gives to each of us the portion most advantageous to our souls. I hope this will find you better. Do not fatigue yourself to answer me, for I know those who suffer have neither heads to compose, nor hands to write. I finish, embracing you heartily, and desiring for you what I wish for myself, that is, holiness of soul and a ready will, like that of Christ towards his Father,—and may God grant it. Amen.

Monday night, the 17th.—My dear M——, I fear my letter, instead of comforting you, will grieve you, by adding grief to grief; but, as this evening is most painful to me, I seek every means to prevent my having time to reflect. It is just seventeen months since my husband, between eight and nine o'clock, left his home, to which he has never returned. O, my God! my God! if this be for thy glory, regard not my tears, but honour thy name.

Oh, Paul! Where art thou, holy warrior of thy Saviour? My God, I bow my head and wait till thou vouchsafest to draw us out of this darkness;—but let nothing separate me from my adored Saviour. . . . All is tranquillity to-night except the two weavers, who are always at work, and a poor woman, who has for a long time had

a bad cough, which never ceases,—and I fear it will end in her *breaking a blood-vessel*. I had a little jelly left, of some that Mons. Colombe* brought me, and I sent it to her, since which she has been easier. I regret it was so little. Another woman has as bad a cough, and is now in bed without hope of ever leaving it. The poor prisoners are like children; to some I give white bread, to others chicken when I have it, to others a bit of cake, to others roasted apples; of all I have, I give a little, as you may imagine, since I live on the generosity of those dear persons who come to see me. To those who are well I send my boiled meat, and when I do not take wine, I say, give it to those who are here for life, and there are two under that sentence,—one about thirty years of age, whose husband is also at Volterra for life, they have left four children; the other prisoner is forty-two years old, and has eight children, the youngest of which was only a month old when she was put in prison.† This poor soul is in a dropsy, and it is thought she

* Swiss Pastor at Florence.

† In one of our visits, Rosa, on placing some flowers in a little earthen pipkin, said, “This is my saucepan; and it has been very useful, for a poor prisoner, on first coming here, lost, through her grief, the natural food of her babe, whose hungry cries distressed me so much that, on receiving my broth, I sopped some bread in it and sent it to the child, who took it greedily. So that I afterwards obtained leave to prepare daily a little bread and milk for the poor infant, who soon began to recognise the pipkin, and, I am told, shewed signs of joy on seeing its approach.”

cannot live a month. When I can send her anything good I do so. You cannot imagine how grateful these unfortunates are for such slight services. If by chance they see me, I hear my name whispered with the interrogation, How are you? I often wonder who told them my name. Once, when the nuns were not near, a prisoner came to my door and said—Take courage! I am here for life, and have left eight children! I was horrified for her. The little window in my door is left ajar, and when the nun's head is turned away, the person appointed weekly to sweep the passages, puts in her duster and makes me a sign as of "Good morning!" Sometimes I see a hand but rarely, lest the window should be too much opened. Even these little attentions give me pleasure. I must leave you at this sad hour of nine.—Good night!

18th, *Tuesday evening*.—I have to-day received a present of an orange from the poor woman who is condemned for life. I was unwilling to deprive her of it; but her messenger entreated me to keep it, for she had so earnestly prayed her to give it to me that she could not refuse. I assure you I delight in seeing how these unhappy prisoners love me. . . . I fear I have distracted your head with this useless recital,—and I will now wish you good night.—Your affectionate

ROSA MADIAL.

From ROSA to FRANCESCO MADIAT.

Ergastolo, Lucca, Cell 36, August 16. 1852.

MY DEAR MADIAT — At length I have this morning received the ratification of our sentence ! My beloved, we bear always in mind, those sacred words of Christ, “ he who leaves not father, mother, wife, husband, &c. for me, is not worthy of me,” and “ he who confesses me not before men, him will not I confess before my Father who is in heaven.” These two things we have accomplished, by the help of that God who is the support of the afflicted ; but the third is still required of us, “ If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me.” My good Madiat, let us bear with adoration and thanksgiving, the cross which divine wisdom has been pleased to impose on us ; and when we feel weak, let us cling to the hem of Christ’s garment, for all who touched it were healed, and thus shall we be strengthened by faith in Him.

Let us remember his sacred words to his disciples, “ In the world, you shall have tribulation, but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.” My beloved, what words of consolation are these for the Lord’s afflicted ones :

The knowledge of his having conquered will give us also strength to conquer in him and by

him. The flesh will certainly suffer, but how many insults did not our innocent Saviour endure ! He, innocent, and we, miserable sinners ! Let us remember, that through much tribulation, we must enter the kingdom of heaven ; and recollect the words of St Paul, " That the sufferings of this world, are not worthy to be compared with the glory that God has prepared for us in heaven." It remains for us to pray for our enemies ; they are more to be pitied than we ! they rejoice, but a miserable enjoyment is it, to do evil to a fellow-creature ! The time will come when all things will be discovered before the Supreme Judge, and then will it be seen who was wrong, and who was right. The testimony of a good conscience is a great comfort. So, my dear Madiai, answer me quickly, and let me know how thou art, and tell me truly if thou art in good health. Arrange so, that I may have a letter every week, which will be a great consolation to me. If thy hand shake, do not mind, thou seest I can scarcely write, and if I can but decipher the letters, I shall be content.

In a few days I will write to my sister,—I know it will be a sad shock to her ; but I will say as little as possible. I am tolerably well, considering the many blows I have received : but what do I say ! how very many more did the sacred hands alone of my Saviour receive from the nails and hammers, to say nothing of the

other parts of his sacred body ! My dear Madiai, thou wilt need the wisdom of Solomon to understand this letter. Let us put ourselves under the protection of God, through the merits of Jesus, our only Saviour. I embrace thee with all my heart.—Thy affectionate wife,

ROSA MADIAT.

FROM FRANCESCO MADIAT to his WIFE.

Volterra, Cell 43, August 20. 1852.

MY DEAR ROSINA,—Thou canst not imagine how much pleasure I have had in seeing thy handwriting, and thus will be mine to thee. Thou bidst me tell thee the truth ; but know that Satan prevents it. Nevertheless, there are persons who know the truth, and therefore the day will come when “all the knots will reach the comb,”—whether in earth, or in heaven, before the tremendous Judge ! I have been, as thou knowest, ill for two months, but there is now a change for the better, and I hope to be cured ; should it be otherwise, God’s will be done ! I will only say, that if Satan has vanquished my flesh by disease, I am certain that my spirit is of Christ. On Wednesday, I left the Murate at five o’clock, suffering much from headache. I hoped to meet thee at the railroad, but was disap-

The Italian style of writing to intimate friends in the second person singular, has been preserved in the translation.

pointed. I saw, however, a French gentleman, with whom I had a long conference, and I revealed to him my afflictions as well as thine. I entreat thee to be tranquil, and when thou writest to me, use much prudence; once a fortnight will suffice. For the rest, let us commend ourselves to the mercy of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. I pray morning and night for thee, and for myself, for our enemies, and for all men. Adieu, my dearest, thou art embraced in heart, by thy affectionate husband,

FRANCESCO MADIAI.

FROM ROSINA MADIAI to her HUSBAND.

Ergastolo, Lucca, Cell 36, August 23. 1852.

MY DEAR HUSBAND,—I have read the Nights of St Augustine, and have found the work beautiful, as displaying the supreme power, the clemency, and the immense might of the Maker of all things, and the love, mercy, and abasement of Jesus Christ for us,—vile, ungrateful sinners. Read it, my love, and thou wilt there see what we owe to God, for the benefit of so great a Saviour; the love and pity we owe to man, who was created after the divine image; and the duty of pardoning and praying for our enemies. When I meditate on all that God has done for us,—we ought, my beloved, to feel honoured in being

termed "galley-slaves" for the name of Christ, the Saviour and Sanctifier of our souls. I have requested the director to purchase the book for me, that I may present it to thee. Read it, at thy leisure, and peruse it many times, and then tell me how thou likest it. Do not, my dear Madiai, be uneasy about me, I am in the keeping of persons charitable not in word only, but in deed.

God knows always where to find friends to aid his afflicted children. Write soon, and let me know how thou art treated in that prison. Hide not the truth from me, but let me share thy sufferings. Thou knowest that griefs divided, are always lightened. I assure thee, I am happier here, than I could have been in liberty, without thee. If we suffer together, we shall together rejoice in that "sacred name at which every knee shall bow." I am well, and I hope thou art also. I embrace thee heartily, and sign myself, thy affectionate wife,

ROSINA MADIAI.

From FRANCESCO to ROSINA.

Volterra, C'eli, August 29. 1852.

MY DEAR ROSINA,—I reply to thy dear letter of the 23d instant, and hear with much pleasure that thou art well, and art so well treat-

ed. For that, I thank God, and the authorities, for the many blessings we share. With thy precious letter, I received thy gift of St Augustine's work, for which I thank thee much : it is very beautiful, and will help and comfort my spirit in the practice of that patience and resignation which is due to God and our neighbours. As regards myself, dear Rosa, my spirit is as calm as oil ; certainly I have been very ill, but by the grace and mercy of my good Jesus, I am now much better, though still very weak ; but by degrees my strength will return, as I have received from the authorities those comforts which were most necessary for me, and for that I am infinitely obliged. Signor Maggiorani wrote to me on the 23d, and gave me brighter hopes ; nevertheless, let us commit ourselves to the Divine Providence.

Signor M. was here when I was very ill, but I am better now. I hoped he would visit thee also, and for that reason, I did not exert myself to write to thee.

I have nought else to say, but to entreat thee to be in peace, and tranquillity, and not to think of me. I have One who thinks for me, and for thee, and who says, " Fear not, I am with thee." Let the winds and storms come, and the mercy of God will save us. Adieu, my beloved. Thy affectionate husband,

F. MADIAI.

From ROSA to her HUSBAND.

Erastolo, Lucca, Cell 37, 7th Sept. 1852.

I rejoice greatly to hear, my dear Madià, that thou art acquiring strength, and art likely soon to regain thy usual good health. I am also better, thanks to God: the Governor allows me to walk in the court, where the linen is dried, which I believe is the real cause of my amendment, as I am thus in the open air. I have *now* a mattress and a pillow for my bed, and a little table, on which I write and dine. I would thou couldst see me at my tea in the evening, with butter, and white bread, and gilt cup, and my green lamp, and other things, which I will not mention, lest I should shock the modesty of my kind director. The under-director is also aimable and lends me books. I am now reading the Life and Confessions of St Augustine. It strikes me thou requirest some lighter reading, and I recommend to thee, "Nicolo de' Lapi," which is interesting, and well written, and will suit thee exactly. Mr Chapman will procure it for thee, and when thou hast read it, I will tell thee of another book. I have just had a visit from the Chevalier, who saw thee, and promised to visit me; he says there are many books at Volterra, which are at thy service, and that "Nicolo de' Lapi" is amongst them. Be

cheerful my beloved, thou knowest "one hundred years of melancholy will not pay a farthing of debt." The good soldier is strengthened in the midst of the battle : there is no day without a night, and no night without a day—and time passes rapidly ! The time will come, when we shall both be walking arm in arm, a little limping perhaps, and then we will talk over our past adventures. I mean not to fret myself, and do not thou. Let the thunder roll, the lightning dazzle, the winds blow, and the hail beat, but the house will not fall, for it is founded on the rock Christ Jesus. Let us then serve God in gladness. Thou knowest I once sung a little, but now voice and ear are lost ; but I will do my best, and instead of foolish songs, I will sing psalms and hymns of joy. Be not so idle in writing ; thou seest how my hands tremble, but I force them to do their duty, and if thou canst not decipher my letter at first, read it a second and a third time. I might have gained a prize in the lottery, I am so cheerful ; but it is the grace of God that sustains me. Adieu, my beloved. Thou art embraced as thou art loved. I am, thy affectionate wife,

ROSINA MADIAL.*

* The above playful description of the comforts of her prison, was evidently intended by Rosa to cheer and satisfy her husband, who was at that time much depressed in spirits, as his health had been completely broken.

FROM ROSINA MADIAI TO MR CHAPMAN.

Ergastolo, Cell 36, 6th Sept. 1852.

MOST RESPECTED SIR,—I have not written before, thinking that Professor Zannetti would have been here, as Signore Maggiorani led me to expect ; in which case I should have had a more detailed account of my husband's illness ; but as the physician has not called, I conclude that my husband's health is improved, and for this I am thankful.

Yesterday a part of my hair was cut off, and in a few days I am to put on the prison dress. I hope the lawyer has not told this to my husband, for he feels more acutely for me than he does for himself: so that when you write to Signore Maggiorani, will you request him to avoid mentioning to Madiai every painful subject which might hinder his recovery. It is necessary that one of us should know the state of our affairs or we should be working in the dark, so if there be any painful thing to communicate, let it be told only to me. I cannot, however, imagine that any other grief awaits us. They have ruined our little fortune, and have thrown us into the depths of "the galleys," amongst thieves and robbers, what other torment can they give us ? As I hear that the governor at Volterra is humane, will you; my good Sir, now you are there, ask if my hus-

band may have his greatcoat? Volterra is so high it must be cold, and to a person who has greatly suffered, and is so much shut up, warm clothing must be comfortable. I thank you for the kind remembrance of your amiable daughter; when you write, I beg you to assure her of my sincere gratitude, and that my prayers are, that God may bestow every happiness, spiritual and temporal, on her and all her family, including the head of the house. Many thanks to the good Christians who remember the buried alive. Oh, Sir, you cannot imagine how much I suffer when I think of the sacrifices you and your son make in that miserable inn, out of mere compassion to us, far from society and the Church; but God who sees the sacrifices will remember them in eternity. May God give us grace to bear with patience the blows we have suffered, and shall suffer, for the love of his Son, our rock. Accept, respected Sir, my sincere gratitude, for yourself and your son whom I salute, and have the honour of signing myself, your servant,

R. MADIAL.

From FRANCESCO to ROSA MADIAL.

Volterra, Cell 43, 10th Sept. 1852.

MY DEAR ROSINA,—The enclosed letter from England, directed to our former home in the

Piazza Sta Maria Novella, has reached me. It appears to be a letter of condolence, but I can only make out the first few lines. Have the kindness, if thou canst understand it, to answer it for us both. Make known the contents to the governor, and let it be translated into Italian and sent to me. With regard to myself, I have been placed in the infirmary since the 2d September, and am well treated. I have a cell with a southern aspect, and have all those comforts which are necessary for a sick man, and have nothing to complain of; so that, my beloved, thou mayest be in peace and tranquillity, and let us hope in the mercy of our good Jesus, who has bestowed upon us so many blessings, and who desires by our sufferings and patience to increase those blessings which are most to be desired. But were it otherwise, let us submit ourselves to the will of God, and bear, with patience and resignation, all that Providence may ordain for us. I am very weak, but have still hope of returning health. Adieu, my beloved. May God grant thee the peace thou desirest, both in body and soul. Thy affectionate husband,

F. MADIAT.

From ROSA to FRANCESCO MADIAT.

Ergastolo, Cell 36, Sept. 16.

MY DEAR MADIAT,—I reply to thy letter of the 10th inst., enclosing the letter of the lady of General Le Fevre. Dost thou not remember, when she lived in our house, how often she asked me to take tea with her? Her residence is at Windsor, where is also the palace of the Queen of England. Having seen our condemnation in the papers, she and others who knew (as she says), the respectability of our home, were much shocked, and not believing that such enormity could exist in Tuscany, she wishes really to know whether the facts stated in the papers are indeed correct. I will not explain further, as Mr Chapman will tell you all the affectionate expressions of this lady, and of General Sir H. Cumming, my former master, and all his family. This is an evidence of Christian charity, for instead of being ashamed of having known us, they are the first to seek us out, poor galley-slaves as we are! May God reward each according to the multitude of his mercies! I saw Signor Maggiorani yesterday, he told me, my dear Madiat, that thou wert really better, and Mr C. says the same. God be praised with our lips, and loved in our hearts. He says, "My son, give me thine heart." Oh yes! let it be His without reserve; and who is so

worthy of it as He who spared not his own Son for us? Therefore, my beloved, though thy illness may be prolonged, remember Job, whom the devil was permitted to torment, to prove whether he was really a servant of God. His "flesh was clothed with worms," yet the devil was shamed and Job blessed. The Bible has not been left to us without a reason; its words should be engraven on our hearts, that in the day of temptation we may remember, that Satan said to God, "he is faithful to thee, because thou hast only touched his goods, but put forth thy hand and touch his flesh, and he will curse thee to thy face: and the Lord said, he is in thine hand, only save his life." My beloved, the fidelity of Job was not only strengthened by his afflictions, but he has since become the type of patience, as Abraham is that of faith. Let us then hope in God, who sees all our griefs, and when He pleases, they will cease, and let us say with Jeremiah, "Yea, though thou shouldst slay me, yet will I hope in thee."* I hear with pleasure that the Director, and through him, all the others, are kind to thee. May God bless their souls and bodies, and also all their relatives. I pray thee to thank them for me, and once more, may God bless thee. My paper is full and my

* Job xiii. 15.—It must be borne in mind that the scripture passages are cited from memory, as the writer was deprived of her Bible. This accounts for a few mistakes in the words.

hand trembles with fatigue, so I take my leave, wishing thee every blessing, and that the holiness of Christ, our Saviour, may rest in thy heart. Amen. Dear Madiai, try to be cheerful. Thou art not yet an hundred years old, and thou knowest that I am six years and some months older than thou, consequently, thou shouldest be the staff of my old age ; so strive to be cheerful, that when it shall please God to put an end to our present troubles, thou mayest have an old woman, of whom no one will rob thee, to accompany thee in thy walks,

R. MADIAT.

From ROSA to MR CHAPMAN.

Ergastolo, Cell 36, Sept. 22. 1852.

MOST RESPECTED SIR,—Would that I could express my gratitude for all you have done, and still do for us, but it is impossible for my lips, or my heart, to express all you deserve. God alone, God, I say, who only can recompense, will render to you the merited reward. I rejoice to find that you think my husband really better, and when you have taken the opinion of a physician, it will give us all great satisfaction. Not that I doubt the ability of the doctor at Volterra, who is much spoken of, but when I was ill in the Bargello, besides two efficient doctors, I had

a physician, and the attention my husband paid to me, I would render to him now that he is ill. The director here is a kind man, and the good nuns are pleasing in their manners ; such persons certainly do honour to the government. I pray you, dear Sir, to encourage my husband ; I know well the depression of the spirit, when the body is weak ;—one seems to be crushed under the weight of mountains, so as to be unable to move in any way. Respected Sir, I hope soon to hear (if it please God) that my poor husband is really better. In the meanwhile, I beg you to accept the gratitude of a wife afflicted by the privation of not being able to minister to her husband in such a critical moment ; but this privation is inflicted by God, blessed be the name of the Lord. I am well, and this morning I felt hungry, which is a good sign. Hoping that this will find you both in good health, I sign myself, with much esteem, your very humble servant,

R. M.

From ROSA MADIAT to MR CHAPMAN.

Ergastolo, Cell 27, Sept. 30. 1852.

MOST ESTEEMED SIR,—Hearing that the Queen has deigned to add her intercession to that of others in favour of the Tuscan prisoners—we, the Madiat, would request them rather to desist from their kind interference. We are most sen-

sible of such great goodness, and God knows our gratitude, but at the same time, we would not too much importune our Sovereign. He has been one of the best in Italy, and I hope that circumstances have not destroyed his good qualities—qualities which live after death ! for clemency survives the tomb ! The Grand Duke has said, that in his own time he would release us ; therefore, we will wait with patience, until God reminds him of us. My husband has never been joined with any party against the Sovereign ; on the contrary, we have suffered annoyances for our known fidelity to him

Will you, then, dear Mr Chapman, have the kindness to write a letter, in the names of Francesco and Rosina Madiai, expressive of our sincere gratitude, both to the King of Prussia, and the Queen of England, and to all others, whoever they may be, that have interfered in our behalf, and say, that we desire to rely entirely on the benignity of our Sovereign. This letter should be put in the papers, to make known to all our sincere gratitude, and to shew at the same time the good opinion we still have of our Sovereign ; and may God, who says, “ He will have mercy on those who are merciful,” give to each, in his infinite wisdom, the double of that mercy they have shewn to others. I received yesterday, a letter from the Misses Senhouse, full of love for me and for my husband.

And you, inhabitants of the mountains, how are you? Now my husband is better; I hope you will take a flight to the city and return to all those comforts, of which you have so long been deprived, that you might console the poor prisoners.* Your charity is recorded in heaven. . . . What you have done for my husband is imprinted on two grateful hearts. May God pour on you rivers of blessing. Dear Sir, I hope you will write soon, and if any attempt to liberate us is frustrated, let us submit ourselves to the will of God. Pray say, whether you and my husband approve of my sentiments. . . . Pardon the trouble I give you. Your humble servant,

ROSA MADIAT.

FROM FRANCESCO MADIAT to his WIFE.

Volterra, October 16. 1852.

MY DEAR ROSA,—As soon as my strength allowed me to give thee an attestation of the great esteem of thy faithful husband, I have not failed to send thee my good news, of which thou hast also been informed, by good Mr Chapman. If not, I will tell thee that I have received thy two letters of the 10th and 20th September, and also that of the 7th inst. They have gladdened me with

* When Francesco M. became so ill, Mr Chapman and his son left Florence, and took up their abode for some time at Volterra, that they might be near to him in his time of need.

the recital of the many privileges thou enjoyest, but I can tell thee also, that I want for nothing that is necessary for my health.

The director himself came to me, and said, he would do all for me in his power, and even offered me my great coat, if I wished to have it, desiring me to be quiet and tranquil and to hope, for he trusted there would be pardon for us.

Thus, thou seest, my beloved, how mercies are bestowed on us by the Father of all mercies and our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, to him alone be the praise from the beginning, now, and for ever, Amen. . . . In regard to myself, I have been very ill since I last wrote, but now, thanks to God, I am much better, and may say, that in a short time, I shall be quit of all my discomforts. There only remains a little inflammation in the stomach, but the doctor tells me, I shall soon lose that ; so that thou seest, I shall only have to regain my strength by degrees, for I am very weak, though for the two last days I have walked a few steps. Dear Rosa, I will conclude. I tell thee that I am resigned to God, and all his holy will concerning me. I have suffered, and I am ready to suffer with patience, resignation and humiliation, always hoping to reach the end. I pray that God's peace may rest on all who pray to him with sincerity. I hope thou prayest for me, but of that, I do not doubt, and I will do the same for thee. For some time back, I have prayed

in my bed, but Jesus sees the heart. I hope, however, in a few days, to pray as usual. I beg thee to be tranquil, and not to think of me; I have everything I desire. Adieu, my beloved, thy affectionate husband,

F. MADIAR.

The Infirmary, Cell 12.

ROSA MADIAR to her HUSBAND.

Ergastolo, Cell 27, October 23. 1852.

DIDST thou but know the pleasure I felt in hearing that thou art better! It was great, and tears of joy ran down my cheeks, for two reasons; first, because God had thought thee worthy to suffer with his beloved Son, and secondly, because he had restored thy health. Oh! may we know how to profit by the humiliations we now endure, for having confessed "that there is but one Mediator between God and man." My beloved, thou speakest to me of expected mercy, but permit me to tell thee, that we have already received the greatest of mercies, when we were separated from each other, our home and property dispersed as dust before the wind, and we ourselves, thou seest to what a state we are reduced! Yet with all that, we, like Moses, would not, for all the treasures of Pharaoh, lose that holy seed given to us by the Holy Spirit! This, I call mercy, and *great mercy!* We have harmed no one; on the

contrary, we have received injury, having been sold for a few dollars,—by one, for a shop gratis ; by another, for fifty dollars ! Poor souls ! our accusers are the descendants of Judas ! I pray God, to give them the tears of Peter, but not the punishment of Judas, and may they hereafter enjoy an eternity of glory ! And were the poor woman, whose false evidence was purchased, again to come to me, to ask for help, as she did in former days, I would again assist her, and thus may God help us. Amen !

My dear Madiat, we are ready to do God's will, as was his Divine Son, our Master, let us not be disquieted. Peter trembled when walking over the water, fearing the stormy waves, and forgetting that if the Saviour walked towards him on those same waters, he had no cause for fear ; he feared, and cried, " Lord, save me." The beneficent hand succoured him, Christ saying, " Man of little faith, why didst thou doubt ?" Yes ! the waves of this troublous earth, too truly make us fear, but it is to our shame. Let us remember those sacred words, " Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for thou art with me, thy rod and thy staff they comfort me." My beloved, repose in the Lord for good, as for evil ; in bad, as in good health. All things pass ! Eternity alone is essential ! Be cheerful, and try to re-establish thy health.

As long as that dear soul is near thee, do not

give thyself the trouble to write, as he will let me know thy state. I hope soon to hear thou art quite well. In the mean while, I embrace thee as I love thee. May our God bless thee, and keep thee under the shadow of his wings, through the mercy of our Saviour Jesus Christ,

ROSA MADIAT.

FROM ROSA MADIAT TO MR CHAPMAN.

Ergastolo, Cell 27, October 23. 1852.

MOST RESPECTED SIR,—I was actually writing to you when another proof of your goodness reached me. I know, dear Sir, the ardent desire you have to see us happy. May God bless all kind hearts ! I thank you for your care of my poor husband ; being weak, it is necessary that he should be kept warm. I do not require anything. I have suffered so much, that all appears to me a dream ! I seem to be a log of wood, cast on the waters, which the current carries where it wills, but that log has two eyes fixed on heaven ! Such is my state, therefore, do not be uneasy about me. I have not seen the Misses Senhouse, possibly they will come next week, if it please God. Pardon me if I write little, as I have had a bad headache for the last three days. Accept, dear Sir, my sincere gratitude, while I sign myself, your humble servant,

ROSA MADIAT.

From ROSA to the Misses SENHOUSE.

Ergastolo, Cell 27, 31st October 1852.

MOST RESPECTED LADIES,—Your goodness has touched my heart, and that of my husband. Visiting us now, is not the same thing as seeing us in the Bargello of Florence ; there, we were near to you, but now we are far off ; one, in the height of a fortress, the other in the galley-prison, and consequently far from the “living.” Such visits would occasion inconvenience, and expense, and it would be indiscreet to encourage them ; but that which the prisoners of the Saviour ask, is the fervent prayers, that as their sufferings increase, so may the Spirit of Christ Jesus abound in them, that they may bow the head and say, Lord, we know not thy intentions, but by faith we know that, “Thou chastisest those whom thou lovest, and punishest those who are dear to thee.” Yes, dear ladies, I will pray that God may give us that peace, which he has promised to his children, and “those rivers of water, springing up into eternal life.” I have just received the visit of the Earl of Roden : he is a man full of the Spirit of God ; the day after to-morrow, he will go to Volterra, and afterwards will return to his own country. May God be with them all. Dear ladies, I will take advantage of your offers, and if you come, do me the favour to bring me “Bax-

ter's Saint's Rest," a little book entitled, "Come to Jesus," and the 2d vol. of the "History of America," which you will find amongst our books. . . . You see, I have profited much by your kindness, but prisoners can do nothing for themselves. The pleasure of seeing you would indeed be a great treat, but how many inconveniences it will involve! I intreat you not to come in bad weather. I can only offer my feeble prayers for such precious creatures, that God may give them happiness on earth, and joy in the kingdom of the living God. Such, my dear good ladies, are the ardent desires of the prisoner of Christ. May the eternal Father hear them, through the sacred merits of his precious Son, Amen. I am not well, but I hope this will find you both in perfect health. Full of esteem, I sign myself, your humble servant,

R. MADIAT.

From ROSA MADIAT to the Misses SENHOUSE.

Ergastolo, Cell 27, Nov. 9. 1852.

MY DEAR AND GOOD LADIES,—I have now to thank you for your letter, which I received on Saturday, and for all the things you sent me by the carrier, which were duly delivered on Sunday; your kindness, which never ceases, had also added biscuits, which were very acceptable. This

reminds me of a curious fact at our trial. I kept the cake you gave me before you left Florence, and although the trial did not take place for two months afterwards, I reserved it for our support in those long days and hours of suffering,—if, indeed, we may call that suffering, which was rather an honour,—the enduring the shame of the cross of Christ. Well, I took my cake, and a small phial of Marsala, and some chocolate, which I had received three months before from Miss C——n, and knowing that my husband was in custody near me, I, being in the midst of gendarmes, requested them to carry part to him, which they courteously did; but as there were two birds in the cage, instead of one, it was necessary to divide the small portion into three shares, and the third, poor soul, needed it more than we did—this was Casacci. On the return of the gendarmes, they brought me some biscuits, so that when we both appeared together at the Tribunal, I asked my husband, who had given them to him? He answered the Misses Senhouse. Was it not curious that we should both, without knowing each other's intentions, have kept your gifts in store for this occasion? I almost could have smiled (*had it been possible*) to think, that though you were not there, we had something of yours. I expect daily a letter from that man of God, Mr Chapman, to hear how my husband is, as the last accounts were good re-

specting his health, for which God be praised. I hope this will find you in perfect health,—thanks be to God, I am much better. Yes! thanks to that God who sustains us, for the love of his well-beloved Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, the only support of wretched mortals!—of those who believe and hope in Him, the only mediator between God and man, in whom, with the Holy Spirit, be all praise to God Almighty,—to the great and tremendous God, toward those who keep not his words,—to him be honour and glory now and for ever. Amen. Pardon, dear ladies, the trouble I give you. God alone can reward the kindness shewn to us. With much esteem and sincere gratitude, I sign myself, your very humble servant,

ROSA MADIAT.

From ROSA MADIAT to the Misses SENHOUSE.

Ergastolo, Cell 27, Nov. 17. 1852.

MY DEAR AND EXCELLENT LADIES,—As Mr Chapman told me he was much engaged, I address myself to you, to save his time, and to give that man of God some news of myself. I received your dear and affectionate letter, with the things you sent me, for which I return you many thanks.

Mr C. being now in Florence, I will thank him to pay a debt of mine to Signore M——, for a bottle of magnesia, and eight papers of needles, which his delicacy may prevent him from mentioning.

There is also another debt, which my husband thinks is paid, but as we believed we should soon be free, I gave no orders about it, hoping that Madiari would be able to discharge it himself, since which time I have forgotten it, so that I will ask Mr C. to pay that also, in my husband's name. There are ten flasks of wine owing for at the vintner's (Gaetano), in Porta Rossa. For we are always hoping to be free, yet remain ever here, and in case of death, I would not go to another world possessing the money of others; we have sufficient sins, without thus increasing their number, but as I have already said, it was not that we would not pay, but that I believed my husband would liquidate it himself. I have heard nothing of my husband, and thinking Mr C. was at Volterra, I wrote to him a letter, but I have had no answer, and am very nervous. Oh woman of little faith! Is it not your Saviour who guards him? O my God, pardon my weakness. Yes, my Jesus! lengthen, even as thou wilt, this imprisonment, but grant us thy strength, —all is sweet with thee. My respects to all who inquire about us. Thanks to God, I am tolerably well. Not to tire you, I proceed, with much

affection and esteem, to sign myself, your very humble servant,

ROSA MADIAT.

P.S.—It is fifteen months to-day since my husband has been the prisoner of the Lord. May God bless him, and sanctify him, through his dear Son. Amen. Very many thanks to you, for having written to the family of General Sir H. Cumming.

ROSA MADIAT to the Misses SENHOUSE.

Ergastolo, Nov. 23. 1852.

DEAR LADIES,—Not knowing Mr Chapman's address, I request you to inform him of my great desire, that my husband should see a physician, for his consolation, as well as for mine; *that* the Government surely cannot refuse! Moreover, if Mr C. may still visit me and my husband, entreat him if possible to let both the visits be made to Madiat, and none to me. Yet more, if Mr C. will shew mercy to me, by going to Volterra for a few days, and will let my husband know he is there, and that he will daily inquire about him of the director, he might (as my husband cannot write) let me know his state. He will pardon this great liberty, but as it is im-

possible for me to do anything for my good husband, some child of God will have pity on me. Oh, pray for the poor prisoners, that as their afflictions increase, so may their faith be strengthened. Your very humble servant,

R. M.

ROSA to the Misses SENHOUSE.

Nov. 27. 1852.

DEAR LADIES,—I received yesterday another proof of your kindness, in a note full of affection, with the other things sent ; may God reward all the trouble you take for us. At the same time that so many proofs of friendship reached me, I had also a most afflicting letter from my husband, in which he narrates all his sufferings. If I bear up, it is by a miracle ! May God so impress on our hearts the sufferings of his well-beloved Son, that we may, by his love, be strengthened to overcome our own. I have nothing further to say, except to beg you to pray for us. Full of gratitude, I sign myself, your humble servant,

R. M.

Mr Chapman saw Rosa on the 25th instant, and found her looking very ill, and much worse than he thought could be justified, by the time that

had elapsed since his last visit two months before. She was comforted by his conversation, and expressed her willingness still to bear the will of God with submission and gratitude.

Mr Chapman, who, like the good Samaritan, had with true Christian benevolence devoted his time and thoughts to these children of God for many months, and had obtained leave to continue his visits to them after their condemnation, in their respective prisons of Lucca and Volterra, had latterly established himself at the last-named place, to soothe and comfort Francesco, who, for ten weeks, had been exceedingly, and sometimes dangerously ill. At length, he was declared better, but still in such a state of weakness, that he could not leave his bed, and it was feared that his mind would suffer from the united effects of incarceration and solitude. It was at this critical moment, that the Government thought fit to put a stop to these charitable visits of our countryman to the sick and imprisoned, without allowing either party to know of the intended deprivation, until after the door was closed against his entrance; so that no word of comfort could be spoken to poor Francesco on the occasion. Mr C. went to Florence immediately, and tried every means in his power, both at the English Embassy, and with the Tuscan Government, to obtain permission to see him oftener than once a month (the time allowed by the fresh order), but

all to no purpose ; and it was at this time that the foregoing letters were written, as Francesco was really too ill to use his pen, although the Government chose to assert that he was quite well, and needed not the requested indulgence.

From FRANCESCO to Mr CHAPMAN.

Volterra, Infirmary Cell, 2d Dec. 1852.

MOST HONOURED SIR,—I reply to your letter of the 22d ult., and am overpowered by your great goodness to me and to my poor afflicted wife, and since you are so kind as to take the trouble, I shall like sent to me * * * * I am a little better, but the future is in the hand of God ; day and night I commit myself to Him, with fervent prayers, and often with tears, imploring grace and mercy to give me patience in my sufferings, and humiliation, and subjection to all his holy will. I pray for myself and for my wife, my brethren in Christ, and for all men, that God may pour his best blessings on them, and on their families, now and for ever. Amen.

My respects to your son and to all friends. It remains only for me to salute you with affection. Your faithful servant in Christ,

FRANCESCO MADIAL.

On the 6th of December, at the expiration of the month since his last visit to Francesco, Mr C. again saw the imprisoned invalid, who appeared much weaker in body, but was still "rejoicing in God his Saviour." He received his kind friend with a burst of feeling, even to tears, which involuntarily ran down his cheeks, and he spoke of the mental sufferings he had endured, when his last earthly comforter was taken from him, and he supposed himself to be left entirely in the hands of his enemies, who appeared to surround him continually; and in his imagination, even things irrational seemed leagued against him, for a bird of evil omen which habitually perched near his window, and hooted, he almost fancied might be an evil spirit, that had come to scare him, and he would then exclaim, "Here I am ready to suffer for my blessed Jesus who died for me!" At other times he derived comfort from outward causes; and once, when a butterfly entered his cell, and rested on his hand, he welcomed it as a messenger of peace from his merciful God. He told Mr Chapman that he believed it was appointed for him to die in prison, and that he was content to do so, but added, do not let my wife or my friends grieve for me. I am ready and willing to submit to the will of God, for although I have suffered, both bodily and mentally, more than I can express, yet I count it nothing compared to the joy I have in my

Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, who is ever with me, and I know will never forsake me ; for the more my troubles increase, " the more does grace abound." He said, that in his devotions he prayed for all prisoners, and for those who had *the charge of them ; then, for the Grand Duke, and that God would grant him grace to see it* was right to give to all his subjects liberty of conscience : and last of all, he prayed for all the brethren in Christ, and was then quite happy. He mentioned that at times some persons* had come to argue with him, but that he had told them he had already made his confession of faith, and by the grace of God he would be stedfast in that faith, for his God was an unchangeable God, and unchangeable also were his views, so that it was useless to argue with him, and that if *that* were their object, he requested they would leave his cell.

From the first day of our arrival in Florence (Oct. 21. 1852), we had endeavoured to procure permission to visit again both these noble sufferers in the cause of Christ, but always unsuccessfully, until the 8th of December, when, through the kind interference of our Minister, Sir H. Bulwer, we obtained leave to see Rosa Madiai three times a month, a privilege for which we were truly thankful, and of which we soon took

Capuchin Friars, acting as chaplains to the prison at Volterra.

advantage, for on the 10th, we were by her bedside, in the Prison of St George in Lucca.* Our meeting was a comfort to both parties, as we had not seen each other since the previous April, before the trial had taken place. Rosa was ill and in bed, having suffered so much distress of mind at her husband's severe illness, that a feverish attack had been induced, and for the previous nine days she had been doubly a prisoner in that little cell, which some have called "a comfortable room," and truly as it was clean, and cleanliness is a comfort, in so far it may be thus designated ; but the cell is small, with a window high up in one corner, a seat or stool without a back, chained to the opposite corner, where there was also a cupboard of a triangular shape fitted into the angle, about ten inches deep ; a footstool was chained near the door, apparently in a useless situation ; a bedstead, and a wooden box, completed the usual furniture of the place ; though to Rosa had been granted (through the kindness of the Governor) a mattress, and a small table. We had chairs to sit on, which were brought for the occasion. Rosa spoke of her willingness to suffer for Christ, and her abhorrence of changing her sentiments to obtain liberty or wealth, which, like St Paul, she considered as nought compared with the riches of Christ ; and

* Commonly called the Ergastolo.

she requested all her friends to pray fervently *that their faith might not fail*. She said her greatest affliction was to know that her husband was ill, and that she could not nurse him; that, at times, she was so overwhelmed with the idea that possibly his mind might become weakened, and the priests might take that opportunity of saying he had recanted, that she could not even pray, although she was on her knees for that purpose; but that the precious promise, that "no man shall pluck them out of my Father's hand," came to her recollection, and she was comforted. She regretted not having her Bible, and religious books. Baxter's *Saints' Rest*, which we had sent at her request, and many similar books were taken from her, and were subsequently given to us by the Director, who told us he could not pass them. He appeared kindly disposed to Rosa, as did also some of the Sisters of Charity, but they said they could do little, as the discipline was strict.

On the 21st of December we repeated our visit, and found Rosa still in bed with lingering fever, which the doctor, in our presence, said medicine could not reach, as her mind was ill at ease. She was glad to see us, but declared she would willingly give up the comfort of seeing us could her self-denial benefit her dear husband, who stood more in need of friendly sympathy than herself; but, alas! our permission extended

not to him, nor could Mr Chapman obtain any increase of leave. Rosa expressed again her readiness and willingness to suffer all that was willed for her by a merciful God, but sorely reproached herself for not rejoicing in tribulation as she thought she ought to do. This humble opinion of herself was indeed beautiful, for in witnessing the entire submission to God's will exhibited by Rosa and Francesco at all times in their imprisonment, we have had realised so vividly before our eyes that apostolical joy in suffering of which we had hitherto only read, that we were even edified by their conduct, and, while feeling our inadequacy to follow their bright example, we could only magnify the grace that had enabled them so boldly "to confess Christ before men." Lord, continue to them that faith and that peace which "Thou alone canst give," and which the kings and rulers of this world "cannot take from them."

Through the intervention of the Prussian Minister at Florence, the pastor of the Swiss congregation in that city, Monsieur Colomb, obtained permission to visit the two prisoners, Francesco and Rosa Madiai, who had formerly attended his ministry, before the Italians were forbidden, in April 1851, under penalty of imprisonment, to enter any place of Protestant worship. This excellent Christian accordingly went to Volterra on the 24th of December, and hoped to be per-

mitted to administer the Lord's Supper to Francesco, but the Director was fearful of incurring the displeasure of his superiors by sanctioning the observance of this rite; and the prisoner, though rejoicing in the idea, yet thought it his duty to decline for the present the comfort he would have had in again commemorating the death of his Saviour in the participation of the bread and wine. M. Colomb, however, read and prayed, and remained about an hour and a half in conversation with this "prisoner of the Lord," whose entire submission to God's will excited his admiration, and it was with the deepest feeling and emotion that he recounted to us the following particulars of this interesting visit.

He told us that never in the whole course of his ministry had he found any one so completely living above the world as this child of God, whom we also had always considered another Nathaniel,— "an Israelite, indeed, in whom is no guile." Francesco said that when he entered those walls he felt that he had done with earthly things, as he believed it was God's will that he should die for his cause, and that therefore he endeavoured to keep his mind from dwelling on subjects that must necessarily distress him; on that account he tried not to think of his beloved wife and her sufferings, except in prayer, when he "cast all his burden on the Lord," and was comforted. He said he was not unhappy in his solitude, for

the time passed quickly. He was constantly in prayer, and his God and Saviour were always with him ; that he thought it was better for him to be in prison than in the world, for he had under existing circumstances fewer temptations, and was nearer to God ; “ that whoever had left house, or friends, or wife, or children, &c., for the kingdom of God, would receive manifold more in this world, and in the world to come life everlasting.” He requested that his wife might be reminded of that text as a message from him, for he was sure that she, like himself, thought it an honour to be thus called to suffer for their blessed Saviour, who had laid down his life for them, and had deemed them worthy to be made partakers of his sufferings. He said that the approach of Christmas had filled his heart with increased love to his wife, and all his friends and brethren in the Lord, and even to his enemies, for all of whom he had besought the Lord earnestly. Monsieur Colomb concluded his recital by declaring that he had received much edification from this interview, and that he esteemed it a great privilege to have witnessed “ so great faith,” and such joy in the Lord in the midst of trials and tribulations, that had left visible marks of their power in his emaciated body and prostrated strength. A feeling this in which all who have had the happiness of seeing and hearing them must deeply sympathise.

Monsieur Colomb saw Rosa on the 29th, and was also exceedingly pleased with her ; her faith being as firmly placed on the Rock of her salvation as was that of her husband, but her many infirmities of the flesh keep her from "rejoicing evermore" in her afflictions for Christ's sake, while she is still ever ready and willing to suffer for his sake ; and reproaches herself severely for not taking pleasure in those sufferings allotted to her. On entering the cell, Monsieur Colomb was requested by the governor "not to speak much of religion !" a strange petition, considering his profession and the object of his visit, but in full accordance with the cruel order, that the Madiai should not have the Protestant Bible, nor any religious books "that might exalt their minds too much." * Monsieur Colomb could not therefore pray with Rosa, nor had he permission to administer the Lord's Supper, but he had a long religious conversation with her, which possibly edified also the person present, as an official or *custode* of some kind must always attend those who visit the prisoners.

A lady being desirous of having an autograph of Rosa Madiai, received the following letter from her :—

* Priest Cahill, in a letter to the Earl of Carlisle, asserted they had the Bible, meaning that nobleman to understand the Protestant Bible (Diodati's). This was not the case ; the Protestant Bible was forbidden.

Lucca Penitentiary, Cell 27, 6th Jan. 1853.

DEAREST LADY,—As I have heard that you would like to receive a few lines in my handwriting, although my hand is weak and trembling, I make a point of acceding to your wish. Without knowing you, I know you in Christ. God is love, and that love finds a response in the hearts of those who love him; and seeing, as I do, that this love is in you, in this holy bond, I salute you and love you. You will already have heard of all my vicissitudes, and all our sufferings, as well those that are past, as those which we still endure—my husband, indeed, much more than I. But why, oh weak, mortal flesh, shouldest thou mourn for such a trifle as this? Oh that we were both like St Paul—imitators of Christ. But instead of this, we are children, tossed to and fro.

Pray for us, dear lady, that God would give us the grace to follow him faithfully, not only into prison, but even unto blood, and unto death, if that would tend to the advancement of His kingdom.

I am told that my husband is better, and I trust, in God's mercy, that this is the case, because his illness increases much my own trial; but in all things, may the will of God be done, so long as the Spirit of God gives us but the grace to say, "Honour to God and the Lamb!" My fever has left me, but I suffer from a spinal com-

plaint, in which my neck, my head, and even my eyes sympathize, causing sometimes great nervousness, and, therefore, pray for us. God has not forgotten us in our trials and weaknesses, and more than a good father, he has pitied, helped, and sustained us; and I am sure, he will sustain us, even to the end, for he never leaves his work imperfect.

We have found some kind persons who have interested themselves for us. Even our superiors (of the prison), as well mine as those of my husband, have shewn themselves good toward us. May God render to them a thousand to one, as well in this world as in heaven.

It is now seventeen months since we have been prisoners, and God only knows when this imprisonment will end. We are reduced to skin and bone, but, oh! my Saviour, what didst not thou become for us?—bound, accused as a blasphemer and a seducer of the people, scourged, reviled with taunts, and a crown of thorns, mocked, and nailed to the cross, men saying, “If thou art the Son of God, come down from the cross, and we will believe thee!” Ah! my Saviour, it was not the nails which held thee; no, it was *love*. Grant that thy prisoners may have this love; that they may enjoy the distinguished honour of being despitefully treated for thy sake. Dear lady, I leave off writing, fearing to abuse your goodness. I trust that this will find you in perfect health.

Should any one inquire after us, I beg you will return our sincere thanks, as well mine as those of my husband. And beg all our friends to pray for us. In much respect, I subscribe myself, your most humble and devoted servant,

ROSA MADIAT.

FROM FRANCESCO MADIAT to Miss S. SENHOUSE.

Volterra, Infirmary Cell.

MOST RESPECTED LADY,—I reply to your letter to me so very dear, and I humble myself with all the respect due to your rank. But as to a sister in Christ Jesus, I take the liberty of writing these two or three lines. In the first place, I continue as usual, rather better than worse. The future is in the hand of God ; my spirit is calm and firm as a house planted upon a rock. I have no hatred to the world, and feel myself quite separate from it, and I have submitted all to the holy will of God, even to the sacrifice of my flesh, which is the most difficult of all sacrifices. As to my wife, I am sorry that she suffers so much grief for me ; but she knows that it behoves us to relinquish husband and wife, brothers and sisters, father and mother, &c. &c., for His name's sake. This ought to gladden and reconcile her, that I suffer willingly for the name of God—the

Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, our Saviour, Friend, and only Mediator between God and man. Christ came in the flesh, was born of the Virgin Mary, and died on the cross, to redeem from their sins all who shall believe in Him, and with sincere heart, ask of Him pardon for all their sins, —so may it be with me! When you go to Lucca, I pray you to read this to my poor afflicted wife, and say to her all these things in my stead. I salute, with my high regards, M——, and all my acquaintance, imploring for them the blessings most precious, as well spiritual as temporal, and that the peace of God may descend upon their families and relatives, as the smoking flax from the earthly Jerusalem, which is never quenched. If I answer not your letters, or those of Mr ——, it is a sign that I am worse. While I am as well as I am now, I will reply to them. There is nothing else for me to tell you. With high regards to yourself and cousin, I declare myself your faithful brother in Christ our Saviour. Amen.

FRANCESCO MADIAI.

From ROSA to a FRIEND.

DEAR BROTHER IN JESUS CHRIST,—I reply, at length, to your kind letter, which I received in the Bargello. It is superfluous for me to relate all my vicissitudes; all that we have had to suffer ;

but let God be praised, and let us praise Him together, for having made us victors by our Lord Jesus Christ. They have struck, and they strike, but Christ replies, "none shall take from me those whom the Father has given to me." Holy lips ! I seem to hear you speak. The words of holy scripture have been accomplished. "Take no thought what thou shalt say ; but whatsoever shall be given you in that hour, that speak ye." Well, dear friend, I can assure you, that if I had not read in the papers what I had spoken, I should never have remembered a word, and this proves, that, "not to us, Lord, not to us, but to Thy name be the praise !" When we were accused of having said that the Apostles were *despicable men*, I replied that it was false, and by the words of the gospel, I was going to shew, whether it was possible for evangelical persons to be guilty of such a thing ; but silence was instantly imposed on me, and I was told, "*we do not speak of religion !*" I replied that I was accused of religion, and that it was on that subject I had to reply and defend myself, but the chief judge imposed silence on me, for the second time. We were accused of having only eight commandments, and in particular, of annulling that which condemns fornication. I said, that before such an accusation, it was only just that I should repeat the commandments, in order to shew whether there were eight or ten. Silence ! was the reply

I then felt rather warm, and said, that it was not justice to impose silence on personal defence. Out of shame, from the presence of so numerous an auditory, a little moderation was shewn, and I was again asked, whether we observed the Ten Commandments? "Certainly," I replied, "such as God dictated to Moses on Mount Sinai." "Silence! that is sufficient," was again heard. In short, dear brother, if such injustice is for the glory of God, be it welcome; but pray for us fervently, in order that we may be enabled to serve and honour Him in this heavy captivity. My husband is very unwell, and that is my greatest affliction; for myself, I am very thin, but better in health, by the grace of the good Jesus. I hope that you and your wife are well. I shall never forget how much she has suffered for me. Kiss your children for me: tell them that my husband and myself exhort them in their exile, not to fear the great ones of this corrupted world, for in a short time they will be in the dust; that of the cause of Christ alone, they should have a holy jealousy in their hearts and in their actions, and that to Him, with the Father, and the Holy Ghost, be honour and glory! Let the Church pray for us; we hope that, with the blessing of God, who gives strength to weak mortals like us, if any one should be called on to suffer for his cause, he will bear in mind how much Jesus has suffered for us.—Your sister in Christ,

ROSA MADIAL.

The person to whom this letter is addressed, had formerly suffered for the cause of Christ, having been imprisoned, and afterwards exiled for six months, at the time that Count Guicciardini suffered a similar persecution in 1851. At the expiration of the sentence, he returned to Florence, under some apprehension of being again rigorously dealt with for his religious opinions, and he was much alarmed at being summoned to the Delegation, where he was detained two hours ; but the object of this conference was to induce him to become *a spy* on his co-religionists. Providentially, an opportunity occurred for his leaving the country as a courier, and he has since wisely remained an exile from Tuscany, in places where he may freely read his Bible, and worship God according to the dictates of his conscience.

About this time the following letter was written by Rosa to a friend ; and it merits attention *from the description it contains of the efforts* which were made by the Romish priesthood to bring her back to the bosom of the Papal Church. Efforts of a like nature were made at subsequent periods, as will be seen from the notes of conversations with the Superior of the Sisters of Mercy,—their confessor, and the Archbishop of Lucca, written by herself, which are also given in this narrative.

From ROSA MADIAI to a FRIEND.

6th January 1853.

I write amidst the tears and lamentations of a poor unhappy creature, who for fifteen days has suffered from fever and pain in the region of the heart. The doctor who visits us every day does nothing for her. I have already had a quarrel with him for his want of attention ; and were I to narrate all, I should fill a sheet as large as an English newspaper. After I had blamed him for his neglect, I said in a few words that I knew speaking the truth generally caused enmity ; but that I would rather tell a person to his face what I thought of him, than repeat the same behind his back. He seemed surprised, and is now more courteous, though not more ready to cure the malady, so that as time brought it, patience must take it away.

On Monday I had a battle with the Confessor of the Sisters on religion, which lasted from an hour and a half to two hours. We began with Napoleon, who was doing such great things, such prodigies ; he loved the Pope, upheld the bishops, restored the Church of St Geneviève, and did many other fine things,—that God had sent him. I, to say something, spoke of the Duke of Wellington's funeral ; and he asked whether he was a Catholic. To shorten the discourse I said

I knew not; and he added,—If he was not a Catholic, without holy mother Church, all is lost. To such an answer, I rejoined,—Whoever is baptized in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, and believes in the cleansing fountain of Christ's blood, is certainly saved. He said, No; certainly he who believes not in the holiness and in the power of the Papal See cannot be saved. I quoted St Paul, who says,—“Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved;” and I asked, From whence does the Pope obtain this power?

Con. From Peter,—since Peter is the cornerstone of the Church.

R. How many stones are there, one or two? He did not answer me, and I continued,—Jesus Christ said to the Pharisees, “Have you not read, The stone which the builder refused, has become the head stone of the corner, and whosoever shall fall on this stone shall be broken;” but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder?”—and this stone is Christ. At the words, “grind him to powder,” he seemed surprised; but he added, Christ when he was on *earth* said this, but on his return to heaven, he appointed Peter in his place. “To whom thou remittest sins, I will remit them”—“thou art Peter, and on this,” &c., &c., and he put him in his place. I said, I acknowledged no other God on earth than Jesus Christ, that there would be no other God

on the earth until his return, although I believed that God is in heaven, in earth, and in every place by the power of his Spirit. The Confessor raised his cap and said, He is in the holy sacrament on the altar. I remained silent at that remark, or I should have gone from the Penitentiary to the Inquisition! I however added, that if Christ addressed himself to Peter, it was to the faith of Peter; and the power he gave to him, he gave also to the other disciples.

Con. No; He said *on Peter* and not *on faith*. Peter was the chief of his brethren.

R. But did he not say to all, Go?

Con. Yes; but that was afterwards.

R. How then had the walls of the city twelve foundations, on which were inscribed the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb? On these walls there was no distinction—Why then does the Pope take such precedence?

Con. As the successor of Peter, and in his place, since God had appointed him in his place.

R. But how can imperfect man sit in the place of God? Peter! who not only was found wanting when his Master was on earth, but also afterwards, for Paul says, "I resisted him to the face, for he was to be blamed."

Con. Where is that said?

R. I do not remember the place; but he not only resisted him to his face, but in face of all those who were with him. Moreover, where

is the Church of Christ? "God is love," and gave his life for the salvation of the world! And what does the Church do, which pretends to imitate Christ and Peter? It takes revenge; some are imprisoned, others are sent to the Inquisition, and some are walled up alive! Is this the love of Christ?

Con. There are many falsehoods.

R. Has not the Inquisition been put down in our days?

Con. The Church calls back the wanderers, and if that does not answer, she must punish them to see if that will bring them back.

R. A beautiful mode certainly! to punish them severely, and wall them up alive, to make the unhappy ones die mad. God has given his precious book to all, and man would take it from them.

Con. The Church has never punished any one for his thoughts, but only for making proselytes. Already in England, there are dukes, lords, and many others coming over to us, and we shall have all England at last.

R. Then I shall believe that we are indeed near the end of the world, since it is said that many will apostatize. I trust for my salvation only in the sacred blood of Jesus Christ.

Con. Holy father Peter!

R. I have every defect but hypocrisy. I believe that the Virgin and the saints existed, and

I admire them for having acted up to the grace given them by God. I can even say, that I have wept when thinking of the griefs of the Virgin,—that sword foretold—which she like an humble servant suffered in silence without lamentation ! And I pray God to make me imitate her great resignation. But I neither pray to her or the saints, and only to the one Mediator between God and man.—I have had a fresh disputation sufficient to fill a book ; but it is near eleven, and my light is going out. My hand and back are tired. Good night.

On the 1st of January 1853, we paid our third visit to Rosa, and for the first time found her out of bed, as the good news of her husband's improved health had had its beneficial effect on her, and she was so cheerful that the two hours we spent with her were most enjoyable. She was clothed in the prison dress, which was made of coarse yellow and white stripped linen, with a mob cap of the same material fitting tight to the head and face, without a border of any kind, and without the "adornment" of hair, which had been cut off, its renewed growth being carefully concealed beneath this disguising skull-cup, which however could not rob her features of their sweet and intelligent expression, or veil those easy, ladylike, and at times, dignified manners, which characterise her deportment, and recall to

memory her Roman birth. Through the great kindness of the Director, who humanely and justly felt that Rosa is not in her proper sphere in such a prison, we were allowed to take her a few comforts, the little contributions of various friends, who were all solicitous to ameliorate, even in the slightest degree, her desolate state; and she received the several offerings with unmixed pleasure, as memorials of those who were her brethren and sisters in the Lord, though to some of them she was unknown in the flesh. Indeed the case of the Madiai has excited the general sympathy of Evangelical Christendom, and proved beyond a doubt, the existence of that bond of union between the children of God, which "if one member suffer, makes all the body suffer with it." If Rosa had a more palatable dinner that day than the prison fare afforded, she had greater delight in having contributed to the enjoyment of others, for she told us, that through the great kindness of the Superior, she had been permitted to give to her fellow prisoners in the *Ergastolo* (who are called "the condemned," in contradistinction to those in another part of the same prison, who are sentenced for a shorter time, and are called "the corrected"), a glass of wine, and a slice of Polenta* to commemorate the new year.

Her endeavour thus to illumine those gloomy

* Polenta is made of maize flour, and resembles oatmeal porridge.

cells with the sunbeam of sympathy and love was deeply touching, while she was herself in bonds, and had necessarily a narrow scope for the indulgence of her benevolent feelings. May the cup of kindness which she administered to others, be returned to her a hundredfold ! We may as well mention here an equally beautiful trait exhibited in the character of both these Christian sufferers, which occurred a year since, when Rosa was in the Bargello, and Francesco in the Murate. An English family with whom both had formerly lived, sent to our care a certain sum for the benefit of the Madiai, and when these "prisoners of the Lord" were informed that this money was at their disposal, the first use that each made of this unexpected fund, was to give a part to others whom they knew to be in want. Indeed, of their charity, in every sense of the word, both in and out of prison, we have had many proofs, and Rosa's late message to two very infirm Christians of her acquaintance, shows the kindness of her heart. "Tell them," she said, "that although I never wish to see Florence or Tuscany again, if it should please God to set us free ; yet, that to see *them* and to assist the poorer brother, I would return once, for I never can expect to meet them elsewhere on earth, as I might possibly all my other friends." This "poorer brother" is a Belgian of the name of Byck, who after having been a courier to many English families, became paralyzed in his

legs, and for twenty years has been a cripple dependent on the assistance of others. In the latter part of this lengthened state of impotence, the Lord had mercy on him, and blessed the reading of the Scriptures to the saving of his soul, so that he left the Roman faith, and became a sincere and devout member of the English Church, by which act he lost a slight pension that had been given him by the Grand Duke in consideration of his infirmities, he not being in any way able to support himself!

We left Rosa with regret, and were as usual deeply impressed by her firm faith, her dutiful submission to God's will, and her great humility, in thinking herself an unworthy recipient of the honour of suffering for, and with, her blessed Saviour, as she could not, with St Paul, "rejoice in tribulation." She exclaimed "When I see my blessed Saviour, will he not say to me, What did I not undergo for you, and how little did you bear for me?" adding, "Oh pray for us, and for me particularly, that I may glorify God, by rejoicing in the trials he has thought me worthy to suffer for his sake: Oh no, not worthy, 'for I am an unprofitable servant.'"

Our visits to Lucca were repeated on the 10th, 21st, and 31st of January, and we were pleased to find Rosa rather improved in health, though she suffered greatly from her old complaint in the spine, which induced the doctor to order for

her an arm-chair, which was a comfort to her weak and aching back. She was also allowed a *Scaldino*, or earthen jar filled with embers, wherewith to warm herself, a luxury granted only to one other female besides herself, among the fifty women in the Ergastolo, some of whom are immured for life! She was also in better spirits, as she had received improved accounts of her husband, which had been confirmed by Mr Chapman, who had visited both in the first week of the month, and who agreed with us in saying, that these interviews with God's afflicted, yet highly privileged children, were really refreshments to our own souls, and lessons for which we should be responsible. Oh! may God in mercy make them effectual to our growth in grace, and the further establishment of his kingdom within us! And may their sufferings be the means of awakening the nations from their deathlike slumber to serve the living God, who has so wonderfully supported the Madiari in this fiery trial of their faith and patience! Both these faithful martyrs declared, that in their prisons they found themselves nearer to God, and more free from temptation, and both were willing to submit to all God's will concerning them; for, said Rosa, "What do we suffer in comparison to the agony endured for us by our blessed Saviour on the cross? to which, O Jesus, thy love bound thee more firmly than did the nails that pierced

thy sacred flesh! We all should like to go to heaven in a chariot, and truly, if permitted, it would be agreeable, but we must enter it by the cross. Yet (she said) we have lost nothing, for what we had was God's, and he has only taken it back to give us a greater portion in his heavenly kingdom." She was always more anxious for her husband's comforts than her own, and not only expressed a wish that all our little offerings should be kept for him, instead of being bestowed on her; but she earnestly requested that some of her four visits a month might be appropriated to Francesco, who had only one; because, as a man, he was more unused to confinement than herself. "Indeed," she added, "If I could but know he was at liberty, I should be content to remain in prison;" a feeling that, we believe, would be fully responded to by her affectionate partner. An attempt was made to procure for Francesco a second visit in the month, but the Government refused, on the plea that his improved health did not require such an indulgence.

The persecution in Tuscany, alas! was not confined to the Madiari; very many others have been, and still are, imprisoned for reading their Bibles, and are yet untried. One of these, Guarducci, a banker's clerk, was well known, and much esteemed by several English families, and he was so highly valued for his integrity by his employers, who are Romanists, that in 1851, when he was

exiled with Count Guicciardini for six months, on account of his religious opinions, they not only kept his situation for him, but (as we understood) paid him his salary during his absence. On his return to Tuscany, he was still a firm believer in the faith "as it is in Jesus," but prudently determined not by any overt act to draw the attention of the police to himself. When, however, the Deputation of the Protestant Alliance of Europe arrived in Florence to plead in favour of the Madiari and their co-religionists, in Nov. 1852, Guarducci became acquainted with some of its members, and was seen in their company; a fact quite sufficient to excite suspicion against him, as it was supposed that this intervention must have some political drift. Accordingly, several gendarmes entered his house in the night, obliged him, his wife, and family, to leave their beds, which were ripped open to search for seditious papers; and although every hole and corner of the house was ransacked during the four hours and a half that they remained in the apartment, nothing more dreadful was found than his Bible, the Psalms, a little text-book for daily use, and two or three tracts, all of which were carefully locked in a trunk. The *Commandante* of the Police was puzzled; for not finding any political papers, he could not arrest him according to the warrant he had, and therefore sent to his superiors for further instructions. They replied,

that "the books found in the house were a sufficient cause (*motivi sufficienti*) for his imprisonment," and that he was to be taken to the Murate, where he remains to this day, not knowing yet the accusation against him; and probably his *real* crime will never be declared, for the Tuscan Government will scarcely venture again on a religious trial, as its first public attempt at persecution has attracted the eyes of the whole civilized world to the unchangeable intolerance of the Romish creed. But God overrules the wrath of man to the furtherance of his own great cause; and this dear brother feels the refining process of affliction in his increased trust and joy in the Lord, whose presence he is made to feel more sensibly than he has words to express.*

Two other persons, known as readers of the Bible, were, in 1852, added to the very many who were previously in the Bargello for their religious opinions; one of them confessed his change of faith and remains in prison, while the other declared himself a Romanist, and was after a time released. A third more fortunate convert fought his battle on his death-bed, and by the grace of God was enabled to conquer. In Tuscany, when a patient is likely to die, the doctor

* While these pages were passing through the press, Guarducci was sentenced, *without trial*, to one year's hard labour in chains in the prison at Volterra, which was afterwards commuted to two years' exile from Tuscany. He is now on his way to England with his family, where he has obtained a situation in a mercantile house.

is obliged by law to desire the family to send for the priest, and to avoid a severe penalty, both parties must conform to the rule. In this instance, the dying Christian thanked the priests for their intentions, but declined their assistance firmly, as he had, he said, made his peace with God, through the sole Mediator Jesus Christ. Earnest and repeated attempts, even with guile, were made to shake the faith of the dying man, by the Romish clergy of various grades; two of whom, it is said, had taken the semblance of Waldensian pastors, to gain the room and the ear of their victim; but all to no purpose, for "He that is faithful hath said, No man shall pluck my sheep out of my Father's hand." The poor man had been excommunicated from the altar, in the hearing of his wife, who was so indignant that they should condemn to eternal punishment a man who had been so changed for the better by his study of the Bible for the two previous years, that she declared the veil, which had been falling from her eyes, was now rent for ever, and that she had done with Romanism. The priests were anxious to transport the invalid into the hospital, where he would have been in their power, but as he was able to pay his doctor, that could not well be managed; so to prevent what they called "a scandal," (as many others in that neighbourhood had, under similar circumstances, refused *man's* absolution for sins

committed against God), a priest, disguised as a friend, entered, as the spirit was passing away, placed a crucifix on the unconscious lips, shouted into the dying man's ear to repeat the "act of faith," and then declared, that he had returned into the bosom of the Church; and accordingly it was announced from the altar, that the prayers of the Church had saved the heretic! "How long, O Lord, how long?" Oh! let thy beams illumine the thick darkness of this land!

FROM FRANCESCO MADIAT to MR CHAPMAN.

Volterra, 25th January 1853.

HONOURED FATHER IN CHRIST,—I take the liberty to call you so, not from any merit which you possess, (for none of us have any,) but from the grace of God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which has inclined you to shew such kindness towards two afflicted creatures, who are groaning in chains, and are undergoing sufferings which are almost unbearable, and all for the holy name of God, without their having given offence to any one; but let all things be according to his holy will! I thank you for the cakes which you have sent to me, and I thank also the governor for permitting me to receive them. . . . I grieve to hear that my poor wife is ill, but she must have patience, and I pray her in the name

of Jesus Christ to be comforted and happy, at least when her health permits her, and not to think of me. I trust in the mercy of our Lord Jesus, who, when I invoke his holy name, ever sends me the Comforter, and I feel my spirit so strengthened, that I would rather die than give up the word of God; and, sinner as I am, I can say with St Paul, "I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus, my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them as nought, that I may win Christ."

I speak with respect to our false witnesses, who thought that we would hold fast to our possessions, and to our well-furnished house, &c., saying "these will be snares to them;" but they knew not that our sentiments proceeded not from any feelings of disgust or anger towards others, but from a spirit of love to God, and to our neighbour, and from our deep and heartfelt convictions.

I beg you to present to the Misses Senhouse my highest respects. I thank them for their prayers. I salute also Mr —— and all my brethren in Christ. I pray for myself, for my poor wife, and for all the brethren, and may God shower down blessings upon all men, as he "makes his sun to shine on the just and on the unjust." May the God of peace bless and save their souls! Amen.
Your son in Christ, and faithful servant,

F. MADIAT.

I forgot to tell you, that my head is still very weak, but God's will be now done, the long night of death will soon pass away, and then I shall see him ! Adieu.

Rosa being uneasy at not hearing from her husband, he was requested by one of his friends to write her immediately, which he did, and at the same time he sent the following letter to Miss Senhouse.

FRANCESCO MADIAI to Miss SENHOUSE.

Volterra, Jan. 30. 1853.

MOST NOBLE LADY,—I am with the greatest respect humiliated before you, for the goodness and sympathy you have shewn to a poor afflicted sick man, who is cast down, but not vanquished, by trials ; and I reply to your dear letter of the 27th, with many thanks. I understand all, and am satisfied. I am much the same : the doctor tells me I begin to mend, and that I shall soon be cured ; but at present my head wanders, so that I cannot write as I would ; but, patience, the will of God be done ! I pray you to salute my poor afflicted wife, and tell her, that I, as a sinner, keep in mind the words of Holy Scripture, and St Paul said, he only expected “ bonds and tribulation ;” and I add, that in those times,

the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, which is the rule given for our salvation, was preached in the piazzas, and also in the synagogues; while we, who were at home with a few persons like ourselves, of evangelical opinions, are now placed in close confinement! But with patience may we say, God's will be done. I have received the biscuits sent by my father in Jesus Christ, Mr Chapman, and thank him much. I must conclude, for I am tired; when I do not write, it is a sign that I cannot. My best respects to all the friends and brethren in Christ Jesus. I wish them the peace that God gives with the knowledge of his sacred Word, and the practice of the same, with fervent prayers, through Jesus Christ, our Saviour. Amen.—Your faithful servant and brother in Christ,

F. MADIAL.

From FRANCESCO to his WIFE.

Volterra, Jan. 1853.

MY DEAR ROSINA,—I hear from those servants of God, who are permitted by the authorities to visit thee (whom I thank for that mercy), that thou art scandalized at me; but this must not be. Christ says, "Let little children come unto me, and forbid them not." It is true, we are old and sinful, but from the moment I gave myself to

God; I felt that no worldly attachment should interfere with the duty of serving God "in spirit and in truth." Let us then trust in his grace and mercy to keep our minds free from all earthly care; and let us both pray that God may so grant us his Holy Spirit, that our testimony may only end with our lives. With regard to my illness, I am much the same in all respects; let us leave everything to God, who cares for all, and chastens those he loves. I earnestly pray thee to be tranquil and prudent, and to serve God with gladness; and do not think of me; I only think of thee in my prayers, and commend thee warmly to my God. Do thou the same for me. My beloved, we must rise above the world. Thou knowest God hath said, "that iniquity shall abound, and the love of many wax cold." Let us pray God that this may not be. I received thy two dear notes of the 4th January, with great pleasure. I have nought else to say, except that I am firm in the faith we have embraced, as I trust thou also art.—Thine affectionate husband,

F. MADIAL.

P.S.—Answer me when thou canst. I hope this will find thee well. I pray God to bestow on thee his most precious blessings,—peace, the love of God, and of our neighbour. Amen.—Adieu. I am tired, not being able to sit up long.

From ROSA to her HUSBAND.

Cell 27, Feb. 13. 1853.

MY DEAR MADIAT,—I have not written to thee sooner, as I waited to hear from Mr Chapman's own lips how thou wert. Now, I will answer thine of the 23d January, and rejoice in the good news of thy health. My dear Madiat, thou sayest in thy letter "that I am scandalized at thee;" how could I be? Certainly there is some mistake. I can only be edified by thee; and I thank my God for keeping alive in thee that sacred flame of faith, which, as thou sayest, will never be extinguished until thou dost restore it to that God who gave it thee to keep. I will say, as Moses said to the Levites, "Seemeth it a small thing unto you, that God hath chosen you above the other tribes?" I read this passage two evenings since, and it struck me forcibly. Indeed, the more we study the Holy Bible, the more we find pearls to gather. Let the wise call us impious and fools, if they will. St Paul says, "If I am wise, I am so for you; and if I am a fool, I am a fool for Christ." If we "are numbered amongst transgressors," so also was the Saviour of believers. "We know in whom we have believed, and therefore have we spoken." Our God is no strange God: His own lips have told us, "No man cometh to the Father, but by me." More-

over he told the Pharisees, "the Scripture cannot be broken." Courage, my friend: if imprisonment be not sufficient for the truth, let us give also our blood—our lives, so they be yielded for that Jesus "who gave up the ghost" in a sea of troubles, for our salvation. Time passes; the punished, and the punishers, are journeying towards eternity, and *there* we shall not find men but God, who sent his Lamb "to take away the sins of the world," and who will know the believers in "*Him*, whom he hath sent." Christ said, "He that believeth on me, believeth not on me, but on him that sent me." Where then is our *impiety* before God? See 1st of Peter, c. iv. v. 14. "If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye; for the Spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you: on their part he is evil spoken of; but on your part, he is glorified. But let none of you suffer as a murderer, or as a thief, or as an evil-doer. Yet if any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God on this behalf." My beloved! let us "pray without ceasing" for an abundant supply of the Holy Spirit, to enable us to fulfil the duties of the situation in which it has pleased God to place us. Let liberty or imprisonment, health or sickness, opulence or poverty, come to us, provided the great God who made us, the mighty Saviour who redeemed us, and the Spirit, the comforter and sanctifier, who revealed the love

of Christ in our hearts, be our only support. To the triune God, blessed through all eternity, be glory for ever. Amen. My beloved ! I rejoice that thou art better ; God be praised for all ; through his goodness, I also am well. Mr Chapman told me thou didst suffer from cold in thy wrists, because thy sleeves were short, so I have made thee a pair of muffetees, rather long, to keep thee warm ; if they be large, wear them over thy sleeves, and if small, put them under ; they will be a memorial of the Ergastolo. When thou hast an opportunity, send me some of thy hair, and so I shall have a memento of Volterra. See what pretty things we present to each other ! Who is so rich as we ? I must take care that the Nun of Lucca trust not too far the Hermit of Volterra ! * * * I conclude, wishing thee good night. May the God of peace watch over thee, and the angel of the Lord defend thee from all evil : this is the fervent prayer of thine affectionate wife. I embrace thee with all my heart, and sign myself, thy companion in prison,

R. MADIAT.

P.S.—How much happier I am in being a prisoner, as thou art such, than I should be in liberty without thee. God does all things well ! Blessed be his name.

In the last visit to Lucca, it was proposed to take a bird to Rosa, who was much pleased with the idea; but her usual self-denial, whenever her husband's comforts were concerned, interfered and occasioned the following letter. It was subsequently discovered that such an indulgence would require a special permission, which it was deemed wiser not to request.

From ROSA to the Misses SENHOUSE.

Cell 27, Feb. 2. 1853.

MY DEAR GOOD LADIES,—I hope you reached your “comfortable home” without inconvenience or cold, especially the dear invalid, who forgets herself in my favour; but God is just, and in his infinite holiness will reward the trouble and affection you have so heartily shewn to his prisoners. I renounce the bird; it would be too noisy for me, but I think it would be very amusing to my husband. I can work and employ my time, but he has nothing to divert him for a moment; his prison is more severe than mine, therefore I will thank you to buy one for him, either a goldfinch or a redbreast,—both are pretty and lively,—and pray remember to provide seeds for the poor new prisoner of Volterra, if the fortress is far from the city. Mr Chapman will do me the favour to take it to Madiai in my name, and

should he object to receive it, Mr Chapman will remind him that Silvio Pellico liked the company of a spider and a fly, and how much more acceptable would be a bird ; for when the window is shut, he might open the cage and put some crumbs near him ; the bird would thus get accustomed to him, and become affectionate, and in accepting it he would please me, for I should know he had some living thing in his cell. A thousand affectionate things for Mr Chapman and his good son. Ask Mr Chapman to embrace my dear husband for me. This is a strange commission for an Englishman who never embraces his own friends ; is it not true ? much less strangers and those who are beneath them ; but as one grants to the dying all they ask, so one excuses the weaknesses of prisoners. I pray you, dear Ladies, to give my respects to all who inquire about us, not forgetting the lame man. Not to abuse your patience I will conclude, embracing you as I love you. Pardon the familiarity of my expressions, which arise not from want of respect, for well do I know to whom I speak ; no ! they proceed from a heart grateful for all that you have done for us ; and as Jesus did not repulse from his sacred bosom the head of John, so I hope you will not reject me for that. The things you brought me are too good ; I have just eaten a bit of the excellent cake, and should have done so a second time had not temperance exclaimed “enough.” If that

word be applicable to eating, it is surely so to writing, so I will finish.

Your humble and devoted servant,

R. MADIAT.

NOTES of a CONVERSATION between ROSA and the
SUPERIOR.

Lucca, 6th Feb. 1853.

After dinner yesterday the Superior entered my cell, apparently wishing to say something to me, yet not knowing how to commence. I expected a scolding for having offered some snuff to a poor prisoner who had none, for which I had been reproved the previous evening by the sister of the Superior, for the prisoners are not allowed to speak to each other, so that I was prepared for that; but it was quite a different subject; indeed she began in the complimentary strain. She asked if Mr Chapman were evangelical. I said he was.

Superior. And all his family?

Rosa. Yes.

Sup. Are all your relatives Roman Catholics?

R. Yes, all.

Sup. How long is it, since you have changed, for is it not true that you were of the same religion?

R. Yes, of the same, and moreover a great bigot.

Sup. What do you mean by a bigot ?

R. I mean a person much devoted to religion.

Sup. What occasioned your change ?

R. The scandals of the Church; and I then recounted all I saw when I went to pray, so that often I knew not whether it were best to remain or to go away. This was also the case with my husband ; for about eight years we read the gospel and continued to frequent our native church, but in consequence of these said disorderly practices, we began to go to the evangelical church without leaving our own, in the hope of finding in it more peace, and there we saw the true Christian respect we sought. From that time we studied more attentively the holy Bible, and prayed God to illumine our minds, and by his grace we were led to keep fast hold of his holy word.

Sup. Since you loved it so well I hope you will return to your first church.

R. If I had left it from caprice, or for interest, it might be so ; but that which is done from conviction must be unchangeable.

Sup. Your husband in his last letter, which was shown to me by the Director, says he is very firm ; did you say anything to him ?

R. I do not remember what I wrote to him, but he, like me, followed the dictates of conscience.

The Superior then requested me to accept a medal of "Mary conceived without sin," attached to a ribbon, which was to be worn round the neck, as she had given one to each of the other prisoners. I took the medal courteously, saying she was very good to think of me, and with her permission I would present it to my husband's sister, to whom I had given all my relics when I changed my faith.

Sup. Keep that for yourself, I will give you another for your sister-in-law.

R. I have worn no images since I studied the second commandment of God, "Thou shalt not make to thyself any graven image," and there can be no mistake, for it is added, "of anything that is in heaven above;" one cannot say that these are holy things, and therefore may be permitted, no, for He explains it, "things that are in heaven above."

Sup. But Christ loved his mother; is not that true?

R. Certainly; and he was subject to his parents according to the flesh.

Sup. Jésus himself has said, He who desires grace will find it by seeking it of my mother.

R. The Church says so, but Jesus says, "Come unto me," and I read in God's holy word, "No man can come unto me, unless the Father which hath sent me draw him," so that he speaks of his Father and not of his mother; and when she

mildly said to her Son, "They have no wine;" he replied, "Woman, what have I to do with thee? mine hour is not yet come;" and that hour must surely come from heaven and not from earth.

Sup. But you do not despise the Madonna and saints?

R. God forbid! I admire them, and pray that the Lord may enable me to imitate those blessed souls to whom he so bounteously granted grace, which they were able to use to their profit.

Sup. Then you believe they had merit?

R. Yes, as far as regards their gain, for the servant said, "Thou deliverdst unto me five talents, behold I have gained beside five talents more; the lord said to him, Well done, thou good and faithful servant, * * * I will make thee ruler over many things." But St Paul says, "By grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God, not of works, lest any man should boast."

Sup. But the Virgin was chosen.

R. It is written, "a virgin shall conceive," but it is not said by whom; that was in the mind of God; but all the redeemed are chosen, for Christ says, "without me ye can do nothing."

Sup. Jesus gave power to the Church, and those who obey not the Church, are wanting towards God, as it is of his ordinance.

R. If I cling to Jesus I shall not be found wanting. I say I cannot be found wanting accord-

ing to his word ; not that I have attained to the perfection of not sinning, since Paul says, "Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect, * * * but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth to those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize ;" and if so faithful a servant said that, how much more ought I to seek for light to go forward !

Sup. I hope God will give you that light.

R. For that I pray.

Sup. Tell me, have you never felt any remorse for leaving your church ?

R. No.

Sup. I mean were you never anxious ?

R. On the contrary, I have had much more peace.

Sup. If that be the case, and you be right, it must go badly with us.

R. God in his infinite wisdom will judge ; but it is said, "Unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required." Jesus said, "I am the door, he who entereth not by the door, the same is a thief and a robber."

The Superior left me in good humour, and soon returned bringing me four oranges and two lemons which she requested me to accept. Another sister has twice argued with me, and in reply said she had the advantage of me, for God had said, "Whose sins you remit, they shall be remitted."

R. But if the Confessor remit them and God should not, what will then be done?—And on that subject we had a long discussion. I know not whether these conversations arise from their own will, or from the orders of others. I expect soon another attack from the friar,—but the Holy Spirit will answer for me. Pray for the poor prisoners, for “we are as new-born babes,” who not only have never tasted meat, but have as yet been fed with little milk ; but God certainly will not leave his work incomplete.

Mr Chapman paid his monthly visits on the 8th and 9th of February to the prisoners, who were both much improved in health and animal spirits, and they exhibited so much of the power and spirit of the gospel in their conversation, that he was cheered and comforted, and praised the Lord “for dealing so bountifully with his servants.” Francesco said he was again able to read, which was a great comfort to him, and that if God restored him to health he should be as happy as a prince, for he could then work ; and as God was ever with him, a prison could afford as much happiness as a palace. He added, “I have been here longer than I expected, and as there seems no probability of release, I can no longer content myself with portions of the Romish Bible. I have made my confession of faith, and have renounced Rome *for ever*, so that my lawyer must demand for me my Bible and the English prayer-book

which were taken from me ; he must also make known to the Government that if we die we desire to be buried in the Protestant Cemetery, that we may lie with those whose faith we shared in life. Another six months of imprisonment is completed, and not to seem proud towards our sovereign, I request my lawyer to present a petition from us for our release." He said " the word of God is my desire and my treasure ; God wrote his law on two tables of stone, which were laid up in the ark, but he has written his gospel on my heart with the blood of his Son which will never be effaced ; my body may be cut to pieces, and my dust scattered to the winds, but my faith will live for ever, for it is God's work." He sent kind messages to the Swiss pastor who was endeavouring to obtain leave to administer to both the prisoners the Lord's Supper : " Tell him," he said, " if I am about to die, I need not that ordinance, for I have Jesus ; he is my peace, my righteousness, my all ! but if it please God to prolong my life, I shall require it as a means of grace to aid me in living to his praise amidst the trials and troubles of this world." Rosa completely echoed these sentiments, and requested that " Hawker's Morning Portion" should be added for her use to the two books already named by her husband.

On the 14th of February we found Rosa in better health and spirits and in a delightful frame

of mind, committing all her concerns to the care of her heavenly Father, whose will she hoped to be able to perform even unto death. In speaking of temporal matters she said, "I know not where our little property is dispersed, or what part of it may be found when we are liberated, if indeed such be the will of God ; but this I know, that 'he who feeds the birds of the air' will not forget us, and I am not high-minded, I do not wish for a larger room than this cell, and this bed would serve for us both ;"—a feeling of contentment that did not accord certainly with our ideas of comfort, for both were small, and the latter particularly diminutive. She expressed her fervent gratitude to all her kind friends, known and unknown, and said she prayed constantly for all of them, though she only mentioned by name C. and S. in such intercessions, adding, like Onesiphorus, "ye have not been ashamed of my bonds," (2 Tim. chap. vi.) ; and on taking leave she touchingly said, "The Lord bless the house of S. as the house of Onesiphorus !" May that prayer be heard through the merits of the same blessed Saviour in whom we both trust ! We told her that hundreds wished for the privilege of visiting her, and that we only had been more fortunate than others in obtaining permission, a favour which we highly prized, and for which we felt responsible to the bounteous Giver of all good things. Rosa mentioned the expostulation of Moses with the sons of Levi, to

which allusion has been made already in her letter to her husband, "Seemeth it but a small thing unto you, that the God of Israel hath separated you from the congregation of Israel to bring you near to himself?" applying it probably to the peculiar situation in which she and her husband had been placed by the providence of God to confess him before the world: for as a Christian friend lately remarked, "It is clear to me, as if written with a sunbeam, that the dear Madi'ai have been set up by God's merciful providence not only as a defence of the gospel, as a living illustration of its sustaining and life-giving power, but especially as a monition,—a voice rallying to union,—a tocsin of preparation for all Christendom to watch and be ready for the coming struggle. No one can doubt, no one who thinks at all upon such subjects does doubt, that we live in times when a tremendous effort is about to be made; and I believe that the providence of God designs in this remarkable case, so uplifted in the contemplation of the people of all lands, to manifest on one hand the unchangeable and utterly antichristian abominations of Popery, and on the other the strength and purity and 'joy and peace in believing' which a simple reliance upon an all-sufficient Saviour ever imparts." Mr Hill, a celebrated lawyer, who has studied the Tuscan laws as regards this particular case, and has proved the illegality of the sentence passed on the Madi'ai in

an able pamphlet recently published, says, "Every fact which has been brought to light in this unhappy controversy has disclosed some trait honourable to the accused, so that if it had been the object of those who instigated the proceedings to make an odious principle still more odious by the circumstances of application, never was an object more completely obtained."

From ROSA to Miss C-

Lucca, Feb. 20. 1853.

DEAR MISS TERESA,—I have already made a mistake in the beginning of my letter, but you will pardon all the faults you may find, for I have a severe headache, occasioned by my spine and my nerves. I suffered much on the 17th of the month, the day on which my husband was imprisoned. Oh, you should be a wife to enable you to appreciate my sufferings! Yes, my good Jesus! Thou hast afflicted him in order to sanctify him; it is grace, and great grace. Oh, enable him to honour thee in all things, as a true and faithful servant, and grant that his wife, in becoming more wise and devout, may never cease to bless and praise thy holy name. Amen. Dear Signorina, I thank you for your kind remembrance, and for your prayers; never cease to offer your supplications at the throne of grace,

that we may, by the unction of the Holy Spirit, be more and more strengthened for the work to which God has vouchsafed to call us. I am writing whilst the friars, the nuns, and the prisoners are singing the "*requiem eternæ*," and "*tantum ergo*," and to ease my headache, there is besides such a smell of incense, that although it is cold, I am obliged to open my window. You say that my prayers rise aloft. Alas ! it is quite the contrary ; if God in mercy did not bow down his ear to my lips, he could not hear them, since the burden of my weakness would weigh them to the earth, rather than raise them to heaven. But it is well for me, that I have to deal with the Father of that Son who has done so much for me. I must leave you now ; if possible, I will this evening recount to you something more.

I now resume my narrative. You must know that the same day the Misses Senhouse paid me a visit, about three quarters of an hour after their departure, a poor woman became insane, and her cries continued till two at night in her cell, which is only two doors from mine. At five, she began to shout, and to say a thousand strange things ; in the morning, when they clean out the house, my door is opened, and I place outside various articles ; at that moment the poor mad creature exclaimed, " I wish to confess." I had the broom in my hand sweeping before my cell, when she continued, " One may name the sin,

but not the sinner." These words excited my curiosity, and as the nuns could not see me, as a door was open, I pretended to dust my own door, and heard the following discourse:—"Yes, I wish to confess my actions, but not those of others. Yes; and do you know they brought me a confessor. I confessed, and he asked me the name of the man. I said, I would not tell his name, I would confess the sin, but not the sinner;" but he replied, "tell me the name that I may absolve you both." At these words, I told the name; and do you know what he did? He sent him to prison for three months! Ah! I will not tell names; the sin I will; but names! No! no! no!" I entered my cell smiling, and said, "This discourse savours more of wisdom than of madness; and how many unhappy creatures are imprisoned by means of this *holy* confession!" This week has been a dreadful one. Next to this mad woman, there is another, who became insane when I was in the Bargello, and on Friday she began to dispute with the fore-named unhappy one; a third sees always beautiful things; another quarrels sometimes till he is tired, and this until bed-time; and even in bed he does the same; he is next to me; as soon as he rises he thumps with his fists, and stamps on the ground. Another who weaves tapes has a fancy for dragging his machine about his cell, and the leaden weights make so great a noise, that I

have been obliged to complain to the nuns. On the same Friday, one of the bad girls caused her door to be opened, under a false pretence, and would not re-enter her cell. When she found herself constrained to do so by six nuns, she threw herself on the ground, and was thus dragged in by them. She seized the scissors to attack the nuns, and at that moment they locked the door, after which she made the place resound with her kicks and shouts. There is another poor dying creature in bed, who is distressed by the mad woman's cries, and I grieve much for her. In the evening, the mad woman, on finding herself alone, escaped, as her cell had accidentally been left open. I was taking my tea with my door half open, all the other cells being closed, the nuns being all at the time in the choir. Thanks be to God! the poor soul fled towards the nuns, for had she come towards me, I should have died of fear. In short, were I to recount all that occurs here some days, and even nights, you would see that few days were passed in tranquillity, independent of our own sufferings, which are not trifling. I hope my poor husband has not suffered from similar trials; for his health is so impaired, and his head so weak, he would feel them even more than I. Dear Signorina, you will indeed be clever if you read this letter; but I can do no better, though I have employed all my talent and strength; so do not cease to pray for us, and re-

ceive the assurances of the sincere affection of
your very humble servant,

ROSA MADIAT.

On the 21st of February and the 2d of March, we again saw Rosa, who was in some measure affected by the weather, which had been rather severe, as rain and snow had been for some days striving for the mastery. The poor nuns, who kindly regretted our exposure to its inclemency in our periodical journeys, amused us and comforted themselves with the assurance that we should thereby acquire more merit!!—little thinking how much the pleasure we experienced in these visits outweighed any little discomfort we might encounter by travelling in bad weather. Rosa asked whether any answer had been received to the petition for pardon? and on hearing that the Minister dared not present it to the Grand Duke, she said, “I own I wish to be free, and I desire still more that my husband should be in liberty; but my gracious Father has seen it fit that we should suffer. He bounteously gave us all, and even more than we needed of this world’s goods, for which we have not been sufficiently thankful, he has therefore placed us here to make us more sensible of his love;” and clasping her hands and looking up, she said, “O! my God, if in leaving these walls I should be farther removed from thee, in mercy keep me here till

death." We reminded her of our Lord's assertion, "that every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit." "Yes," she added, "Christ is the vine, ye are the branches, and without me ye can do nothing," how true is this ! and how beautiful is St Paul's simile of the olive-tree, and how important his remark, 'Boast not, thou bearest not the root, but the root thee !' " St Paul was her chief favourite amongst the apostles ; his fervour, love, and noble bearing in his Master's cause, found an echo in her heart, inducing the desire to be like him, a valiant, faithful soldier of the Lord.

About this time, Francesco's sister paid the prisoners a visit, and at their request called on us on her return. She is much attached to her brother, and was deeply affected, even to tears, while giving us a recital of the interview she had with each, and of the great change that had taken place in Francesco since she last saw him at his trial. Although she had made many attempts to visit him in the Bargello and in the Murate, (the two prisons in which he was first placed), she had only once obtained leave to do so, though the Tuscan laws permit prisoners to see their *relatives*. Candida went first to Lucca, and was rejoiced to find her sister-in-law looking well though weak, and she was pleased to see her in the possession of some few little comforts, which greatly mitigated the misery of confinement, and

for which Rosa was indebted to the kindness and humanity of her keepers. Candida went the following day to Volterra, and met with an ungracious reception from the Director, who called Francesco an "infamous man," an epithet too harsh for a sister's ear, which was accustomed only to hear his praise; and she replied, that from a child he had been good and amiable, and that such a term could not, she was sure, be justly applied to him: when the Director repeated, he is "infamous, for he will not listen to the priests!" She was, however, allowed to see her brother, who was in bed, and so much altered that at first she could scarcely recognise him, and she was sadly distressed to find that his mind had suffered from the treatment he had undergone. She was also distressed at the discomfort of his cell, which required the little favours (of a table, a chair, a cup, &c.) which Rosa had obtained, to make it look rather better than a prison, and naturally concluding he was badly cared for, (*mal custodito*,) she accordingly remonstrated with the governor and the doctor on their apparent neglect of a sick man. During this visit, a Capuchin Friar entered with a book, which he desired Francesco to read. Francesco requested that he might not be thus cruelly disturbed in his conversation with his sister, who had journeyed about fifty miles to see him; that, moreover, he could not then read from weakness, and that when he could exert

himself he studied only the Bible, from which he derived his faith: the said Bible being only a portion of the Romish edition of the Scriptures. The pertinacious friar at last departed, and the poor persecuted prisoner observed, that he considered such visits as part of his punishment. Candida reminded her brother of the last visit he had paid her, some years previously, when she was dangerously ill, and his affection for her prompted him to take out to her residence (ten miles from the town) one of the most eminent physicians in Florence, whose prescriptions were blessed to her recovery. He smiled and remarked, that had he not done so, he might not then have had the great comfort of seeing her by his bedside. Her presence had indeed cheered him, and opened afresh the springs of deep affection, which must ever exist in those bosoms that feelingly acknowledge the strong tie of consanguinity; and in a subsequent letter to his sister, he expresses the joy and contentment he had experienced in seeing her, and in finding that her affection for him had not decreased.

Mr Chapman repeated his monthly visits to the prisoners on the 5th and 7th of March, and found Francesco better in health, and his faith burning as brightly as ever, being nourished by the Spirit of God. When he heard that his wife had declared her readiness to shed her blood for her blessed Saviour, he exclaimed "Oh, yes, I will

give not only my blood, but my bones!" and truly considering his extreme emaciation, he had little else then bones to offer. While discoursing on the free pardon purchased for us by the "one Mediator between God and man, the Lord Jesus Christ," he observed, if "he be the way, the truth, and the life," why should we seek to others for salvation? If my earthly sovereign had proclaimed a pardon for all his rebellious subjects, who would ask another for it? Should I go to his lords and courtiers to obtain the forgiveness already so freely offered to all who would claim it? Or, were there a scarcity of water in the land, all the springs and wells being dry or sealed, save the inexhaustible fount of my Sovereign, who, in mercy to his people, opens it to the public, and cries, "Ho every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters; yea come, and buy; without money, and without price,"—should I tarry by the way-side, vainly to seek what I cannot find, and then "spend my labour, for that which satisfieth not?"

Rosa was suffering much from her eyes, which had for some time been troublesome, and we greatly feared that the humidity of the newly-built walls of her prison might affect them permanently, as it is said that blindness is often induced by a residence in houses similarly circumstanced. On the 10th, we found the complaint had increased, and she could with difficulty read half a page at a time. She seemed alive to the

possibility of the loss of vision, for she said, "What should I do without my sight?" but as usual quieted her fears by "casting her burden on the Lord," whose will she ever desired should be done in her, and by her.

She had had a second visit from the Archbishop of Lucca two days before, and immediately committed their conversation to writing.

NOTES of a CONVERSATION with the ARCHBISHOP of
LUCCA.

On the 8th of March, I had a second visit from the Archbishop of Lucca, who arrived with a great retinue; Father Peter and the Superior only entered with him, the door was then shut, and the others remained outside. The Archbishop was mild and kind in his manner, and looked like a patriarch. On entering, he raised his hands, blessing me, and saying, "God bless you, God bless you." I came forward, having in my hand the 85th Psalm, which Madiari had sent me, and taking the Archbishop's hand, I kissed it, and said, "Monsignore, you could not have wished for me anything more acceptable than the blessing of God; if God blesses me, I shall indeed be blessed." We seated ourselves, and he asked how I was? I replied, "thanks be to God, I am tolerably well." He silently read the Psalm and said, "You

have never commanded my services, I had hoped you would have availed yourself of my visit."

"Monsignore, I never should have taken such a liberty."

"On the contrary, you would have conferred a particular favour on me."

"Monsignore, you are very good."

"How is it that you have forgotten your mother, your good mother, in whom you were born?"

I looked fixedly at him, and said, "Monsignore, I have no mother."

"I mean the Church."

"Monsignore, I have never left the Church."

"What books have you, are they prayer-books?"

"My books are these." He took up 'Uncle Tom's Cabin,' which Miss —— had brought me, and said, "This is good, I have read it."

I was annoyed that he should only have noticed the novels, and with an air of indifference, I said, "Yes, there are some good meditations in it, but my study is the Bible."

"Where is it?"

"I expect Father Peter will bring it to me."

"I fear you keep too much to the letter, there are many things which the Scriptures say must not be done, and yet they *are* done; for instance, 'Swear not,' and yet people do swear. 'Repent and be baptized,' and yet people are baptized, and believe afterwards, therefore you ——"

"Permit me to answer you. In those times,

there were no believers, and consequently, they must have believed first and then have been baptized ; but now that children are born of believers, they are baptized and brought up in the faith of their parents."

"You converse well, and they tell me you are very good, but you have left the Church in which you were born."

"Monsignore, I am very ignorant, and my goodness can only be judged by appearance."

"Then you believe in God and in the apostles?"

"If I believed not the apostles, I would not believe in God, for Jesus brought the gospel, but did not write it ; the apostles wrote it."

"Do you not believe that Jesus said, 'Strengthen thy brethren ?'"

"Yes."

"And that he said to Peter, 'On this stone I will build my Church ?'"

Father Peter moved his head up and down in approbation, while the Superior remained silent. I replied, "Whom say you that I am ? Peter answered, Thou art the Christ, the son of the living God. Thou art Peter, and upon this rock ; but who was the rock, or stone, which the builders refused ?"

"Certainly Christ is the corner-stone, but Peter was chosen."

"True, for Peter believed, and was made a 'lively stone.' I grant this, and I also believe

that all believers, resting on this corner-stone, become lively stones to build up the spiritual house." I remarked also, "that when the waves beat into the ship, Peter and all the disciples were in it, but Peter could not still the sea, it was the Saviour who rebuked it." Again, "the wall of the city had twelve foundations, on which were the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb; but there was no distinction. They also sat on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel."

"Is it not true that God founded a Church?"

"Yes, certainly."

"Therefore there must be a head."

"Certainly, there is a head; in every house one person must be the head, but I do not believe in a God on earth."

"We are not speaking of that. Who is your head, the Queen?"

"I know nothing of Queens, that is," I added, "I have spoken too fast, the authorities are of God, and must therefore be respected; but ——" *

We told Rosa that a friend of ours had recently had permission to visit the prison, and had been

* We have thought it right to give this fragment as it is. The notes of the Conversation were never finished, but the above fragment will give an idea of the manner in which a simple and unlettered woman was enabled, by God's grace, "to give a reason of the hope that was in her." In justice to the Archbishop of Lucca let it be said, that he made no attempt to terrify her into a recantation; though we cannot but think that his smoothness and plausibility were as dangerous as any menace could have been.

very near her cell. She said she remembered hearing strange voices a few days before, and might have seen the party, as her door was often kindly left open to give her more air, but she refrained from looking out that she might not abuse the confidence thus placed in her by the Sisters of Charity. Indeed, we remarked with pleasure the increasing respect shewn to her by all who surrounded her, thus fulfilling that gracious promise, "that when a man's ways please the Lord, he maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him;" and proving beyond a doubt, that rectitude of principle and conduct, under such trying circumstances, and even in the more trivial and hourly trials of life, must ever have a beneficial influence on its fortunate observers. Let us not then, as Protestants, longer regret that we can do nothing to forward the diffusion of the blessed gospel, while passing through these benighted countries where Romish ignorance and superstition hold their sway; it is true we may not use the means which are lawfully and laudably adopted in our more favoured land, but each may, and ought to live consistently with the pure faith he professes, and "let his light so shine before men, that they may see his good works, and glorify his Father which is in heaven." Thus silently but surely, he may sow a good seed, which the influence of the Holy Spirit may fructify and cause to bring forth an hundredfold.

Oh ! may that blessed Spirit so direct and influence us, and all who call themselves the disciples and followers of Jesus, "that we may be epistles of Christ, known and read of all men ;" "Not that we are sufficient of ourselves, to think anything, as of ourselves, but our sufficiency is of God." Those who suspect the fallacy of this opinion should have entered that cell with us, where, we have often said, Rosa Madiai sat as a queen in the little circle, receiving her guests with all the ease and dignity that adorn a court. This demeanour, in some measure, is with her a natural gift, only softened and sweetened by religion : but the respect of the good nuns (who were always witnesses of our meetings, and never commenced their knitting or stitching on these occasions, without first asking leave to do so of "la Signora Madiai"), and their desire to alleviate as far as they could, the troubles and sorrows of a heretic whom they had been taught to believe as lost eternally, must have been produced by her great and noble consistency of character, which thus displayed the holy beauty of the Christianity she so boldly and unflinchingly professed, a beauty which shone in our hearts and there engendered deep esteem and sincere affection for the faithful martyr, while we could not but be greatly humiliated at our own vast inferiority, notwithstanding our very many and superior advantages. Oh ! may this bright example quicken us all in

our sluggish course, and excite us to "run with more vigilance, and patience, the race that is set before us."

Rosa found opportunities for the exercise of her kind and generous feelings even in that solitary cell, not only in sharing with the sick and dying the little comforts taken to her, but in nobly coming forward to plead the cause of the wretched inmates of the prison, at the risk of offending the directors of the establishment. She gave us an account of this circumstance in the following words. "Some days ago I had a long conversation with the Superior and the Sub-Director, and had the Governor been there it would have made no difference to me. A poor prisoner who was ill, and had been out of her mind for some days, was at that time tranquil; all that was thought to be necessary was given to her, and she was, according to the rules of the place, left alone. During her solitude she felt the symptoms of returning madness, and called loudly for assistance, but no one answered. She wept, and exclaimed, 'Oh! my Jesus, avert from me this horrible malady!' and at length she again became delirious. I burned with indignation in my cell that a fellow-creature should thus be left alone, and although she afterwards received what she required, I own my anger was not subdued. Just then I heard the voices of persons approaching, and hoped they were not

coming to me, or that God might 'keep the door of my lips.' However, the Sub-Director and the Superior did enter and inquired how I was. I replied that 'I was thinking I ought to prepare myself for going to the madhouse.' 'Why?' 'Because I see that all here travel that road.' 'No truly! there has only been one case of madness, and this is the second.' 'But what do you say to the person in the opposite cell who quarrels with her mad neighbour; she who disputes with the insane must surely be herself insane?' 'Yes, but she was in Saint Bonafazio (the bedlam of Florence) twice ere she came here, and has been mad once since.' 'Do you call the two near to me in their right mind; one quarrels for days together, then takes to her bed, from which she only rises to sing or beat against the walls or floor; is she sane?' 'Oh! she is bad.' 'And the other next to her, who weeps and drags about the weaving loom before going to bed?' 'She is not mad, her brain is weak.' 'And those who are in irons?' 'Those are wicked.' 'Yes! yes! you may judge as you please, but I see all are travelling the same road, and therefore I too must prepare to follow. That the Government should deprive of liberty those who do evil is well; that they should be separated from friends is well; but to take from them motion, sight, and speech, and shut them up alone from morning till night, and from night till morning, is cruelty indeed, and savours more

of the vengeance of men than the fear of God. The dying are left alone. Had the poor woman who was rational for a short time had another prisoner placed with her, to amuse and encourage her, or to read to her some good book, she might not have had a relapse. Were the prisoners for three or four hours in the day allowed to work together, even in silence, under the superintendence of the nuns, it would in some measure relieve the gloom and tedium of being ever alone ; but to be immured like wild beasts must produce disease or madness.' The under-Director said he could do nothing, and that the Minister of Grace and Justice alone could alter the discipline of the prison ; but the Superior was of my opinion, and said that 'the plan I had suggested had been carried out when she was at St Gimignano ; that there all the prisoners were assembled in four large rooms, to receive instruction from the nun who presided in each, and that they returned to their separate cells to dine and sleep,—thus the poor creatures were happier, the nuns had less to do, and all were more content.' I do not think my remonstrance did me any harm, but had it been otherwise I must have spoken ; for to gain justice for a suffering fellow-creature I would be laden with chains."

The knowledge of these sufferings must have increased Rosa's mental griefs, and the shouts, howlings, bad language, and continued noise of

the unruly, affected even her bodily frame, and frequently deprived her of sleep. Often has she said to us, "None but those who have experienced it can tell the misery of imprisonment."

This visit had been peculiarly gratifying, for notwithstanding all this wretchedness and her many corporeal infirmities, she was still in peace, and content to "wait the Lord's pleasure;" and on taking leave she repeated a request she had previously made, that she might have our likenesses as companions in her solitude, a petition which the desire of pleasing her might have induced us to grant; but, thanks to our faithful and prayer-hearing God, we had not the opportunity of deciding this weighty question, for on the 16th of March, a kind friend came to tell us that the Madiai had, the day before, received the official information of the commutation of their sentence into perpetual exile from Tuscany, and that the French Consul at Leghorn would have the charge of them until they sailed for Marseilles. In the hope of once more seeing these noble confessors of the truth, we started immediately with our mutual friend Mr Chapman for Leghorn, but the vessel that wafted them from their native land had sailed two hours previously, and we had only the comfort, the very great comfort, of knowing they were *actually* on board; for on examining the list of passengers at the steam-boat office, we recognised with heartfelt pleasure the names

of François and Rosa Pulini,—the maiden name of the latter having been probably adopted to avoid the excitement and attention which the now celebrated one of Madiai must ever occasion for it is a well-known fact, that this cruel persecution of the servants of the Lord has created general and intense interest, not only in their co-religionists throughout Christendom, but also among the Romanists,—who feel that the punishment far exceeds the crime, and who begin to suspect that the Bible is of greater value than they had been taught to believe.

The overpowering weight of joy we had so suddenly and unexpectedly experienced in the release of the Madiai, had a counterbalance in the knowledge that, owing to the secrecy enjoined in their deportation, the Governor had feared to avail himself of the warm clothing left at the inn at Volterra by a friend for Francesco, on the possible occurrence of such an event, and that, consequently, he could only have of his own the one summer suit he wore when he was taken to that prison, to be clothed (as he afterwards was) in the felon's dress. We therefore greatly feared that his exposure to wet and cold, in addition to the very stormy and boisterous sea voyage, might seriously injure his already shattered frame; but we took comfort in the assurance, that the same providential care which had opened their prison doors would conduct them in safety through all

their perils "to the haven where they would be." This trust was well founded, and we had again to praise God "who maketh light to shine in darkness to the upright," and never forsaketh those who fear him. "Oh that men would therefore praise the Lord, for his mercy endureth for ever." In consequence of a note which Rosa contrived to send on shore, the English Consul and English Chaplain of Leghorn immediately went on board, and the former seeing poor Francesco's summer clothing, most kindly furnished him with warmer garments, and would have advanced them any money they might require, as no time or opportunity had been given them to apprize their friends of their changed circumstances. They declined the generous offer, saying, that their passage was paid, and that between them they had about two pounds, which would suffice until their friends sent them the produce of the furniture that had been sold. Thus they commenced their journey into exile, in full confidence that their God would provide for them the necessities of life.

We heard that Rosa had reached Leghorn some hours before Francesco, and in the belief that she only was to be released, she nobly and positively refused to leave Tuscany without her husband, nor could she be induced to go on board until the French Consul offered to give her his word of honour as a gentleman, that Francesco

would join her after the arrival of the next train, which he accordingly did, and they met on board, after a cruel and unjust imprisonment of nineteen months ! Rosa was greatly shocked at the sad change that had taken place in Francesco's appearance since she last saw him at the trial in June 1852, and she was still more distressed by the wanderings of his mind, which, in the course of the night, amounted almost to delirium ; the excitement of that day having no doubt increased the malady. She subsequently said, she could scarcely recognise her husband in the feeble and emaciated form that descended the cabin stairs : that " he seemed a tree lopped of all its branches ;" and she could scarcely repress her tears, which found vent at length while she watched beside his bed. The severity of the storm banished sleep, and caused them some apprehension ; but they felt it would be sweeter far to perish together in the " great deep," than to linger out, apart, a solitary existence.

Mr Chapman followed the Madias to Marseilles, where he found them surrounded by Christian friends, who were anxious to befriend them in every possible way ; and one kind person, as soon as the scantiness of Francesco's wardrobe was known, quickly supplied some of its deficiencies. Indeed the interest they excited was so great, that even in the Protestant Church there, they attracted so much notice, that the police desired them never again to enter it ; but they fearlessly replied, that

they had dearly purchased their liberty of conscience, and would not easily give it up ; that the authorities might send them out of the country, or commit them to prison, but they would attend the Protestant worship ; although they wished not to excite any disturbance, and only required rest and quiet to recruit their health ere they continued their journey. They were afterwards summoned before the Perfect, who eventually gave them leave to remain as long as they liked, or to go to any part of France they pleased, provided they had no demonstrations, and retained always the name of Pulini.

After a residence of three weeks, they left Marseilles for Hyères, with a passport made out in their own name of Madiat, and took possession of rooms, which the kindness of Sir Culling Eardley had prepared for them. Francesco regained health and strength daily, thus proving that imprisonment alone had been the cause of illness.

Rosa's naturally fragile frame at length sunk under the exertion she had so long made to rise above her own grief for her husband's sake, and she suffered severely from her head and chest for some weeks ; indeed, her lungs were so much affected, that the doctor declared she ought not to think of a residence in Switzerland, where the kindness of many generous and judicious Christians had hoped to establish them in a situation

suited to their inclinations. For the present, therefore, they will remain at Cannes, or Nice, to recruit their strength, until the Great Disposer of all events "makes plain their path" of duty.

A wish expressed by the Madiai, since their liberation, must not be omitted; they requested that a present might be made, in their name, to the woman, already mentioned in a letter, who witnessed falsely against them at their trial, that she might thus be assured of their forgiveness. They also remitted a debt due to them from the same person.

We returned to Florence with gladdened, yet strange to say, with heavy hearts. Our occupation was at an end; those precious saints, who had employed our time and thoughts were gone, and the idea that we might never meet them again in this world, would intrude itself unbidden; but all such selfish feelings were soon absorbed in joy for their deliverance, and thankfulness that we had been permitted, by the providential arrangement of that God "who careth even for the sparrows," to administer in any way to his servants; an office to which thousands would have aspired, and would have filled with zeal and affection. For it was, indeed, a high privilege to visit these true servants of the living God, in the fiery furnace of their great affliction! There, we saw them kiss the hand that with undoubted love thus tried them; and there

we heard them lift their voice in psalms of praise to their beloved Saviour! The bitter and cruel persecution they endured, shook to the centre their earthly tabernacle; but amidst the wreck of blighted health and stricken fortune, their immortal spirits, sustained by heavenly aid, rose high above all, joyously triumphant. Oh! may the example we have seen in those Tuscan prisons, of unwavering faith, of patience, and even joy in tribulation, of love to God, to his word, and to his people, of forgiveness of injuries, of unselfish and generous compassion for the sufferings of others, never be lost upon any of us.

We add one other letter received from Rosa since her liberation.

From ROSA to the Misses SENHOUSE.

Hyères, May 2. 1853.

OUR VERY DEAR AND GENEROUS BENEFACTORS,—
In what manner can I express the gratitude we owe you? Who will teach us sufficiently to demonstrate it? Alas! ignorant as I am, how can I undertake to thank you for all your charity, your love, your good Christian counsel, your trouble, and even your expense? O my God! I invoke thee to help my weakness, and as thou hast made them labourers in thy harvest, pour upon these dear, dear ladies, such showers of blessings,

that they may more fervently serve thee in this life, and (as they have already begun to do) enjoy thee eternally in that glory which has no end. Pardon me, dear ladies, for not writing sooner ; you will believe it was not from neglect. From the time I reached Marseilles, I have suffered greatly in my head, the back part of which feels quite empty, so that I forget all that is told to me. Nevertheless, I did begin a letter to you ere we saw Mr Chapman. His arrival gave us great joy, and truly God must have sent him, for I know not how we should otherwise have answered all the letters we have received, or have arranged everything with so much prudence and zeal for the glory of God, as still to keep ourselves as it were hidden. I know not what has occasioned this feeling in my head ; it might be the wind, and storm we encountered at sea, though I was not alarmed ; but they were two dreadful nights, and I said to my husband, " It is sweeter to go to the bottom of the sea, than to die in prison." I cannot describe to you the state in which I again found my dear Madiat, nor could I believe my eyes, when I saw the change that had taken place in the few months since I last saw him. His eyes staring, his head on his breast, so that he appeared hump-backed, his legs had no strength to enable him to descend the cabin stairs ; it was quite dark, when I heard the voices of those who assisted him, saying, " Gently, take courage, there

is no hurry!" At length he entered, trembling from the exertion he had made. I helped him to sit down; but his long hair, and the dress which you know he had on, you may imagine the effect it had on me; he seemed a tree lopped of all its branches. I tried to hide my feelings from him; but oh, miserable humanity! after a short time, I could not restrain my tears; and he consoled me. I asked for something warm for him; they brought me bread, boiled in water, with butter; but God had provided for me. Certain ladies had taken to Lucca such a store of provisions, that a part still remained; and I placed a nice little supper before my husband, of a leg of fowl, butter, English bread, and Marsalæ; after he had eaten a little, I put him to bed. We did not separate that night; but it was a night of much agitation, entirely without sleep. He often rose trembling; held on, here and there, to steady himself, that he might see whether I slept. The second night he slept a little, but was much agitated; and so he went on, from day to day, getting better; but the belief that he had been poisoned never leaves him, and to this day we cannot disabuse him of the idea. I pray God he may forget it. When I left Marseilles, I was better, though still suffering. We arrived on Friday; the next day I was not well; and the third day, I was taken from church to my bed with fever and pain in my side, and was long too

ill to enjoy the comfort of religious services, or to write to those dear souls to whom we were so anxious to express our gratitude. The doctor has since said that my chest is weak, and that I must be careful, and must not think of passing the winter in Geneva, which grieves me, as it is the place I most fancy, on account of its tranquillity and its religious privileges. But let us leave all in the hands of our heavenly Father, who, I hope, will give me still a little time to serve him on earth. My dear Miss, I speak so much of myself! and how are you who have suffered so long, and your cousin who suffers in your suffering? Oh, dear souls! what flowers of patience do you offer to God! and what do I offer him? Oh, miserable that I am! I grow worse. "When I would do good, evil is present with me." Pray for us. Dear ladies, did you but know the sorrow I felt, and still feel, in not having seen you ere I left Tuscany. When I was told we were free, I asked for three days, that I might go to Florence, and was refused. Oh, if I had had wings, how quickly would I have flown to pay my first visit at Casa Romoli, and then to other friends! But if I had possessed wings, I must have risen high in the air, to avoid the Austrian bullets! Dear ladies, how very much trouble and fatigue my husband and I have occasioned you. God will repay you. How much obliged we are also for your delightful letters, expressive

of such love as you feel for your relations, thus forgetting the difference that exists between us. Who could help loving you? Yes, it will be a great pleasure to me to see you again, if it please God, and to embrace you heartily. My husband cannot express all the gratitude, love, and respect, he feels in his heart, and he kisses your hands respectfully. I pray you to salute Margherita for me. Were she near me, we would console each other, since we have both bad health, though afflicted in different ways. Remember us with affection to the impotent man—I name the unfortunate first—then to all who are interested for us, or have been kind to us; say, May God in his bounty bless and repay them all, make them happy on earth, and prepare them for the glory of his holy name, so that many may be added to give praise to him who sitteth upon the throne, and to the Lamb. Amen.

We wait the doctor's permission to go to Nice, where I shall be happy to find a letter from you to greet my arrival. Dear ladies, I shall not be content until I have your portraits. I do not wish them painted, only let them be sketched, and I will hang them in our room. There will be four, and they may be our "*saints*," two ladies and two gentlemen, who have *really* prayed for us. I will boldly say, when it is convenient to you, they will be a most acceptable present to us. I hope Miss Sarah is better; her cousin will re-

joice in seeing her out again. May the heavenly light accompany you wherever you go ; the grace of Christ be your daily food ; and the water that springeth up unto eternal life be the constant refreshment of your spirits ;—these are the desires of one who will never forget such dear friends, and who has the fortune to sign herself, your humble and affectionate servant,

ROSA MADIAI.

P.S.—My husband's health is much improved. Many thanks to Miss B——. As soon as I can, I will express to her, by letter, our gratitude. God bless all !

To these noble confessors, every true Protestant owes a heavy debt of gratitude, for their courageous testimony, and their unflinching defence of the principles of our common faith ; and also for having been the appointed means of rending the veil, which many, even alas ! in our own Church, would gladly fling over the more hideous features of Romanism. Popery now stands unmasked in all her own unchangeable deformity ; the cup of intoxicating delusion which she offers to the unwary, is more plainly and indelibly marked *Poison*, so “that, all who run may read,” and learn their increased responsibility !

Few persons, we should imagine, who were fully acquainted with all the facts connected with

the case of the Madias, would venture still to assert that Popery had ceased to be a cruel and persecuting Church. It is true, we no longer see her victims slain, and her martyrs burned in our streets; but we do see her emissaries "haling men and women, and committing them to prison," and we hear in her dungeons the cries of the persecuted, and their prayers to God for deliverance, in his own good time, from sufferings of mind and body, compared to which, the short sharp pangs of martyrdom were far more endurable! Let the sighing of the "prisoners come before thee, O Lord; according to the greatness of thy power, preserve thou those that are appointed to die." And may the nations, and our own land especially, so be roused by the tocsin thou hast now sounded through the world, that they may turn to thee, the living God, and serve thee in sincerity and truth. Thus may we hereafter see realised the following prediction of M. D. Hill, Esq., in his recent pamphlet on this subject: "On this memorable prosecution posterity will look back, as giving the date of another expansion of the Protestant influence, and even to the sufferers the consolation may be vouchsafed of knowing that the affliction which they have borne has been the appointed means of rescuing multitudes from a worse than Egyptian bondage." "Even so, O Lord!" Amen!"

APPENDIX.

LETTERE ORIGINALI, &c.

ROSA MADIAI ad un' AMICA.

MIA CARA AMICA,—Lo stato in cui mi viene detto che siete situata, mi costringe di scrivervi, sentendo che siete stata in una camera senza amici che possino sollevarvi in molte ore di tristezza ! altrimenti, nè mani, nè capo, mi avrebbero dato forza di dirigervi la presente, scritta sopra le mie ginocchia, per mancanza di comodo. Al mio primo arrivare che feci qui, mi fù detto, che avevano levato un' altra per darmi una migliore carcere a me ; di fatti, era una cella grandina, con una inferiate alta, per cui, ci voleva un lungo bastone, con una forca di ferro per aprirla, e chiuderla, ma ci entrava una buona aria, e nella mia afflizione, ne fui in qualche maniera sollevata, e dubitava che di peggio non venisse. Questó fu di Giovedì ; ebbi una tazza di cavolo con fagioli, acqua e un pane circa il valore d' una crazia, e la sera, un pane ed acqua. La mattina di poi, sentendomi cadere per mancanza di vitto, poichè non poteva mangiare con lo stomaco debole, e credo anche la febbre, per tanti strazzi sofferti, pregai che mi dessero un caffè, ma mi fù risposto che non era permesso ; al più, vedendo la mia gran' debolezza, mi volevano fare una minestrina ;—mi portarono un pane grattato denso, e l'olio che ci era, mi stomacò ; ma pure fui obbligato per gran stento di mangiarne,

almeno quanto ne potei inghiottire. Gli domandai se mi farebbero il piacere di farlo col burro, mi dissero che non si servivano mai di burro; finalmente, vidi il dottore, e fui messa a mezzo-vitto; ma mi basta, e non so per quanto tempo, poichè il mio cibo dev'essere magro sei giorni,—o baccalà, o fagioli, o patate coll' olio, ed acqua, sei giorni; la Domenica, la minestra ed il bollito, e un bicchiere di vino; la stessa cosa sarà per mio povero marito; ma ciò che mi fa più pena, si è, che lui per due mesi, è stato molto male: ma, mia cara amica, pregate caldamente per noi, che Dio ci conceda di poterlo onorare e benedire di cuore, nel posto che gli è piaciuto metterci; “lo Spirito è pronto, ma la carne” dà assalti *terribili*! Sento più per il mio marito, che per me. Io cucio le camicie per i galeotti, ma lui, senza far niente, sempre in quella medesima carcere infetta! Si dice, c'è una finestra, ma quando piove, o fa freddo, finestra, porta, chiusa! O nessuno può conoscere le miserie dei prigionieri, senza provarle! Continuo la mia storia. Quando arrivai alla mia buona detta carcere, oltre tutti gl' incomodi sù nominati, quasi sotto la mia carcere, ci erano due ragazze di vita cattiva, che esse, per pessime disposizioni sono sottoposte a severi gastighi, come la camicia di forza, ed i ferri; gli urli, i pianti, le bestemmie, parole da fare inorridire, notte e giorno! Dopo, ne aggiunsero una terza; allora sì, che fino, gli uomini carcerati, che sono sotto, e accanto a noi, circa a 300, erano obbligati di dirgli che si chetassero; e quando gli furono levati i ferri, i picchi, le pedate alle porte, che facevano rimbombare le carceri! fino sputare in faccia alle monache! Ma quello non era tutto; un uomo matto, che quando lo curavano, piangeva sempre. Di più, la notte, la corte degli uomini, che è sotto le nostre carceri, c'è la visita, e si sentono quei terribili chiavone aprire, e chiudere; ed ogni quarto d'ora, le tre sentinelle sono obbligate a dare il segno che sono sveglie, e il segno è, un gran grido, con la risposta di gridi dalle altre sentinelle, fino vicino a giorno!

Dopo pochi giorni, fui cambiata per una camera peggiore, ciò è la carcere dell' Ergastolo ; carcere più piccola, solajo più basso, finestra più piccola, e metà della finestra coperta con gelosia, detto per non vedere gli uomini, ma nè anche se fossimo gatti, si potrebbero vedere. C'è una pancuccia tonda piccola per sedere, in un canto, e perchè uno non sieda dove vuole, è ferma con una catena, vicino alla finestra,—ma, la finestra alta per privare ogni sorta di sollievo. C'è un panchetto, dove sono ora seduta, scrivendo sulla tavola del letto, ma anche questa ha la catena, che non si può muovere ; a se sedendo si volesse appoggiare i piedi, la catena l'impedisce. Il letto è murato con ferri per terra, infine, si studiano tutti per rendere gl' infelici miserabili in tutte le maniere. Dalla situazione di mia cella, l'odore che ci entrava fu orribile. La mia compagnia sono cattive parole, che si sentono dai carcerati che stanno fuori ; un telajo da tessitore accanto alla mia cella, che comincia alle sei della mattina fino alla sera ; un altro telajo, quasi incontro, e il terzo telajo, circa sette porte distante. Ma è meglio che cessi di parlare di questi luoghi di vera miseria. Vengo di ricevere una lettera dal mio marito, e mi dice ch' è passato nell' infermeria, questo mi mostra che è sempre malato. Dio ci dia la forza di chinare il capo per terra, e dire, “ la Tua volontà sia pienamente fatta ! ” Ogni giorno crescono nuove afflizioni. O Dio, accresci la nostra fede, la nostra ubbidienza, e fa che la tua volontà sia fatta ed adempita dai tuoi *galeotti* ! Fa, che il Demonio si stanchi di tormentarci, ma che i tuoi prigionieri non si stanchino mai di amarti, e benedirti ! Mia cara Margherita, io temo che questa lettera, in vece di darvi quella consolazione, che mi era proposta, ha in vece accresciuto pene, a pene. O perdonatemi, mia cara, io dovevo parlare di voi, e in vece, io ho parlato di me. Dite a tutti che preghino molto per noi, che Dio sia sempre glorificato. Mia cara amica, spero, che presto il nostro buon Dio vi consolerà, facendovi trovare qualche situazione per lasciare la nostra miserabile terra. Ah! possiamo dire

con Geremià, “ Ah fossero i nostri occhi due rive per piangere la disgrazia della figliuola d’ Italià ! ” Mia cara, se volete, potete scrivermi, ma rammentativi che le lettere vanno in mano a mille persone, sicchè in caso non mettete alla fine della lettera, altro nome che la vostra, Margherita. Salutate tutti i nostri conoscenti, ditegli che li amo nell’amore di Gesù Cristo, e che non si perdino di coraggio.

ROSA MADIAT.

ROSA MADIAT a FRANCESCO.

*Dal Penitenzario di St Giorgio,
Lucca, il 16 Agosto 1852.*

MIO CARO MADIAT,—Finalmente questa mattina, ho avuto la ratificazione della nostra sentenza. Mio caro, abbiamo sempre in mente le sante parole di Cristo, “ Chi non lascia padre, madre, moglie, marito, per me, non è degno di me ; chi non mi confesserà dinanzi agli uomini, io non lo confesserò dinanzi al Padre mio, che è in cielo.” Queste due cose sono adempiute, per la forza di quell’ Iddio che è l’appoggio dei deboli. Ora, ci manca la terza ; “ Chi non toglie la sua croce, e non viene dietro a me, non è degno di me ! ” Mio buon Madiat, prendiamo con adorazione e rendimento di grazia, la croce, che la sua sapienza divina gli piace d’imporre : e quando si sentiamo deboli, attachiamoci al lembo della tonica di Gesù ; che tutti quelli che lo toccavano, erano risanati ; così saremo fortificati, per fede in lui ! Rammentiamoci le sue sante parole ai suoi discepoli, ‘ Voi avrete tribolazione nel mondo ! ma state di buon cuore, io ho vinto il mondo.’ Mio caro ! che parole di consolazione per gli afflitti del Salvatore ! Sapendo, che avendo vinto Lui, darà la forza anche a noi, di vincere in lui, e con lui. Il corpo soffrirà di certo, ma quanti strazi ha sopportato l’innocente, nostro Salvatore ! Lui innocente, e noi miserabili peccatori ! Rammentiamoci

che per molte tribolazione, si entra in cielo ; Ricordiamoci delle parole di S. Paolo, “ Che le pene di questa terra, non sono punto da paragonarsi, con le delizie che Dio ci ha preparato in cielo ! ”

A noi ci resta, mio caro, di pregare per i nostri nemici, sono più da compiangersi di noi ; essi godono, ma miserabile godimento ! di far male al suo simile ! Il tempo verrà, quando tutte le cose saranno scoperte dinanzi al Giudice Supremo, e lì, sarà veduto, chi ha torto, e chi ha ragione. La testimonianza d'una buona coscienza e una gran cosa, sicchè, mio caro, rispondimi presto, e fammi sapere, come stai, e dimmi la pura verità, se stai bene in salute. Fa in maniera che io abbia tutte le settimane, una tua lettera, poichè mi sarà di gran consolazione. Se ti trema la mano, non fa nulla, tu vedi che ne anche io posso scrivere, ma mi basta, che io possa deciferare le lettere, e sono contenta. Fra qualche giorno, scriverò alla mia sorella ; so che sarà per loro un colpo mortale, ma dirò il meno possibile. Mio caro, io sto passabilmente bene, considerando le tante scosse ricevute ; ma che dico ? quante mai più di me, ne ha ricevute, solo la sacra mano del mio Salvatore, da chiodi, e martelli ! senza nominare tutte le altre parti del suo sacro corpo ! Mio caro, per intendere questa lettera, ti è necessaria la sapienza di Salomone ! Mettiamoci sotto la protezione di Dio, nei sacri meriti de Gesù, nostro solo Salvatore.—Ti abbraccio di cuore, la tua affezionata moglie,

ROSINA MADIAT.

FRANCESCO a ROSA MADIAT.

Agosto 20. 1852, Volterra, Cella 43.

MIA CARA ROSINA,—Non puoi immaginare, quanto mi ha fatto piacere, il vedere le tue poche linee del tuo carattere, e così sarà di me a te.

Mi dici che ti dica la verità, ma Satana l'impedisce ; ma vi

sono persone che la verità la conoscano, perciò, verrà il giorno "che tutti nodi giungeranno al pettine," sia in terra, o sia in cielo, davanti al Giudice tremendo. Io, come tu sai, sono adesso due mesi che stava malato, ma ora pare che il tempo cambi, e così spero di guarire; se sarà all'opposto, sia fatta la volontà di Dio! Solo ti dico, che, se Satana ha vinto la mia carne, di questo sono sicuro, che lo spirito mio, è, del buon Gesù.

Finalmente, il Mercoledì partii alle cinque, con gran dolore di testa, e sudore; arrivai alla strada-ferrata, credendo di vederti, ma fu invano! ma però, vidi un Francese, con chi, ebbi una lunga conferenza, e gli raccontai le mie affezioni, ed anche le tue. Adesso ti dirò di stare tranquilla, e quando mi scrivi, scrivi sempre molto prudente, e basta tutti quindici giorni. Al resto, rimettiamoci tutto, nella misericordia del nostro Signore Gesù Cristo, e Salvatore nostro. Io prego mattina e sera, per me, e per te, per i nostri nemici, ed in generale. Addio cara, ti abbraccio di cuore, tuo affezionissimo marito.

F. MADIAT.

ROSA a FRANCESCO MADIAT.

Ergastolo, Cella 36. Agosto 23. 1852.

MIO CARO MADIAT,—Ho letto le Notti di S. Agostino, e le ho trovate deliziose, talmente dimostrano la suprema potenza, la clemenza, l'immenso potere del Fattore di tutte le cose, l'amore, la carità, l'abbassamento di Gesù Cristo per noi, ingrati peccatori! Leggile, mio caro, e vedrai come è disritto ciò che dobbiamo a Dio, nei sacri meriti di un tanto Salvatore! la compassione, la carità che dobbiamo agli uomini creati alla sua propria immagine! il perdonare, il pregare per i nostri nemici! Mio caro, quando consideriamo quanto Iddio ha fatto per noi, ci dobbiamo trovarci onorati di portare il nome di galeotti, per il santo nome di Cristo, Salva-

tore e Santificatore delle anime nostre ! Sicchè, io ho fatto comprarle per parte del Sign^o Direttore, e te le mando in regalo. Tu potrai leggerle a tuo comodo, e leggile più volte, e poi mi dirai come le trovi. Mio buon Madiai, di me non ti prendi pena ; io sono in mano di gente, non caritatevole di nome, ma caritatevole di fatto. Iddio sa sempre trovare delle anime Cristiane, per sollevare i suoi affliti. Rispondimi presto, fammi sapere come tu stai ; e come sei trattato in quel luogo : non celarmi la verità ; fammi parte delle tue sofferenze ; tu sai che quando sono divise, sono sempre più dolci. Ti assicuro, che io sono più felice quà, che in libertà senza di tè : Se insieme soffriamo, insieme goderemo, in quel sacro nome, davanti al quale ogni ginocchio, deve piegarsi. Io sto bene, come spero che sia di te. Ti abbraccio di cuore, mentre mi segno la tua aff^a moglie,

ROSINA MADIAI.

FRANCESCO MADIAI a ROSINA MADIAI.

Volterra, Cella 43. Agosto 29. 1852.

MIA CARA ROSINA,—Rispondo alla tua cara, in data del 23 corrente, e sento, con molto piacere, che stai bene, e che sei così ben trattata, di ciò ringrazio Iddio, e le autorità, di tante benedizioni, che ti vengano compartite. Unita alla tua cara, ricevetti le Notti di S. Agostino, che mi mandi in regalo ; te ne ringrazio tanto, e le trovo molte belle, così mi ajutano sempre più lo spirito, ed a confortarmi viè più nella pazienza, e rassegnazione, che si deve a Dio ed al nostro prossimo. In quanto a me, cara Rosina, il mio spirito è calmo come l'olio, in perfetta realtà, ma certo, io sono molto debole, ma a poco alla volta, le forze torneranno, poichè, ho ricevuto dalle autorità tutti quei conforti a me più necessari, e sono infinitamente obbligato di ciò. Il 23, mi ha scritto il Signore M——, e ci dà buone speranze ; ma però, rimettiamoci il tutto alla Provvidenza divina. Il Sig^o M. fu qui da me, giusto quando non stava

punto bene, ma ora sto assai meglio, e spero che tu l'avrai visto, per questo non mi sono dato la pena di scriverti. Altro non mi resta a dirti; solo stia tranquilla, e in pace, e non pensare a me; io ho chi pensa per me, e per te, e chi ci dice, "non temere, sono qua, io." Lascia pure le tempeste, e gli uragani che vengano! la misericordia di Dio ci salverà! Addio cara, il tuo aff^{mo}. marito,

F. MADIAT.

ROSINA MADIAT al Sig.^e CHAPMAN.

Ergastolo, 6 Settembre, 1852.

STIMA^{mo}. SIG. CHAPMAN.—Io non ho risposto prima, pensando, che Zannetti sarebbe venuto, come aveva detto l'Avvocato M——, ed avrei avuto più dettagli rapporto alla malattia di mio marito; ma, non essendo venuto, suppongo che veramente la sua salute va di molto migliorando, grazia a Dio! Ieri, mi furono tagliati una parte dei capelli, e in pochi giorni dovrò indossare l'abito dell'istituto. Spero che l'Avvocato non l'abbia fatto sapere al mio marito, poichè sono le sue pene più per rapporto a me, che per se medesimo. Sicchè quando scriverà al Sig. M——, la prego, che qualunque cosa possa fare pena a lui, s'eviti, per non impedire il progresso di sua guarigione. A me, di certo è necessario, che uno di due sappia i nostri affari, altrimenti si lavora alla cieca, sicchè, se c'è qualche cosa che faccia pena, sia io sola che la sappia. Già non saprei conoscere che altro dispiacere ci possa essere, quando ci hanno rovinati dei nostri traffichi modesti, e ci hanno gettati in un fondo d'una galera, fra i ladri, e gli omicidj; che possano pensare di tormentarci di più? Sicchè mi si dice, che il Sig.^e Direttore di Volterra è molto umano, ora, che lei, buon Sig.^e Chapman è lì, la prego di sentire se permette, al mio marito di avere a Volterra il suo pastrano; costà su ci deve fare molto freddo, e per una persona che ha sofferto, e stando molto rinchiuso, gli sarà un gran conforto * * *

La ringrazio della garbata rimembranza della sua amabile figliuola ; quando le scriverà, la prego di dimostrarle le mie vere riconoscenze, e che le mie deboli preghiere sono, che Iddio le dia tutta la felicità sia spirituale, come temporale, ad essa, ed anche a tutta la sua famiglia, compresa anche il capo di casa. Tanti saluti a tutte le buone Signore, che si rammentano dei *Vivi Sepolti*. Ah Signore, se sapesse quanto io soffro, sapendo lei, ed il suo buon figliuolo, sacrificati in quel miserabile luogo, per mera vostra compassione, privi della loro società, "and the Church." Ma Dio ! Iddio, che vede i loro sacrifici, gliene terrà conto, nella vita eterna ! Dio ci dia la grazia a soffrire con pazienza i colpi di martello che abbiamo sofferto, e soffriamo, per amore del suo santo Figliuolo, nostra sola rocca. Riceve, rispettabile Sig.^o le mie sincere riconoscenze, sia a lei, come al suo caro figliuolo, il cui, la prego di salutare di parte mia. Ho l'onore di dirmi, la sua serva,

ROSA MADIAI.

ROSA MADIAI a FRANCESCO MADIAI.

Ergastalo, Sep. 16. 1852.

MIO CARO MADIAI,—Rispondo alla tua, scrittami dal 10 del presente mese, in cui, c'è la lettera della moglie del Generale Le Fevre ; tu ti rammenti, quando abitava in casa nostra, quanto sovente m'invitava a prendere il tè con lei. La sua residenza è a Windsor, dov'è il palazzo reale della Regina d'Inghilterra ; ma la sua casa porta il nome della Regina, Vittoria Place. Avendo dunque letto nel giornale, la nostra condanna, sia lei, e gli altri Signori, conoscendo bene la casa rispettabile, (come dice la Signora) gli è stato un gran colpo; tanto a lei, che a tutti gli altri, e non potendo credere, che esista tanta enormità in Toscana ! vuole sapere, se veramente il fatto è così, come si legge in tutt'i giornali.

Non ti finisco di spiegarti la lettera, poicchè il Signor

Chapman ti avrà spiegato a voce, tutte le affezionate espressioni della detta Signora, ed anche il Generale Cumming, mio Signore, con tutta la di lui famiglia. Di più si mostra la carità Cristiana, che in vece di vergognarsi di averci conosciuti innanzi, sono i primi a cercare di noi, poveri galeotti! Dio renda ad ognuno la loro mercede, secondo la moltitudine delle sue misericordie! Vidi jeri il Sig^a M——, e mi fece credere, che veramente tu, mio buono Madiat, stai meglio, ed il Sig^a C. mi dice lo stesso. Dio sia lodato dalle nostre bocche, ed amato dai nostri cuori! poicchè ci dice, “Mio figlio, dammi il tuo cuore.” Ah! sì, sia tutto suo senza riserva! e chi ne è più degno di lui, chi non ha risparmiato il suo proprio figliuolo per noi? Sicchè, mio caro, ancorchè la tua malattia andasse a lungo, rammentati di Giobbe, che il diavolo gli fu permesso di tormentarlo per provarlo, se veramente era servo di Dio. La sua carne era rivestita in vermi! ma, il diavolo fu svergognato! e Giobbe benedetto! La sacra Bibbia non ci è lasciato senza un perchè, ma che la teniamo impressa nei nostri cuori; ed al giorno della tentazione, ci rammentiamo, che Satana disse a Dio, “Ti è fedele, a motivo che tu gli hai tolti i beni, ma non hai toccato il suo corpo; tocca la sua carne, e vedrai se non ti maledice in faccia.” Dio rispose, “affliggilo come tu vuoi nel suo corpo.” Mio caro, la fedeltà di Giobbe, dopo tante fortissime afflizioni, non sola, fu ristorato più di quel che era prima, ma, egli è stato fatto il tipo della pazienza, come Abramo della fede. Mio caro, speriamo in Dio, egli vede le nostre sofferenze, e quando a lui piacerà, tutto dovrà cessare, e che diciamo con Geremia,* “Quando anche mio Dio, tu m’ammazzassi, non cesserò di sperare in te.” * * * * *

Mio caro, la carta finisce, e la mano è tremante, e stanca, sicchè ti lascio, augurandoti tutte le benedizioni, e la santità di Cristo, nostro Salvatore che resti nel tuo cuore. Così sia.

R. M.

* Giobbe.

ROSA MADIAI al Sig.^a CHAPMAN.

Da questa Cella 36, Settim.^a 22. 1852.

RISPETT^{mo}. SIGNORE,—Vorrei poterle esprimere la mia riconoscenza di tutto ciò che lei ha fatto, e fa per noi, ma è impossibile che le mie labbra, ed il mio cuore possano esprimere quanto ella merita. Dio solo, Dio dico, che è il solo che ricompensa, Egli le renderà la dovuta mercede. In tanto, mi rallegro di sentire che mio marito si crede veramente meglio, e quando avrà sentito il parere del professore, sarà una grande soddisfazione per noi tutti. Non che io dubito della saggia cura del Dottore di Volterra; anzi si parla di lui con molto elogio, ma, siccome quando io fui malata al Bargello, oltri di due Dottori sapienti, ebbi anche il professore: perciò, le attenzioni che egli desiderò per me, devo renderle a lui, ora ch'è malato. Ebbi una visita jeri, dalle Signore Y. e G.

Il Direttore è una persona dabbene, ed anche la bella maniera delle buone Suore; di certo tali persone fanno onore al governo. Caro Signore, la prego di fare coraggio al mio marito. Io so che cosa è l'abbatimento di spirito; quando il corpo è debole, pare di avere tutte le montagne adosso, che non si possa muovere da alcuna parte.

Respett^{mo}. Signore, spero presto, se piace a Dio, di sentire che il mio povero marito sta veramente meglio. Intanto, la prego di ricevere le riconoscenze d'una moglie afflitta per la privazione di non potere assistere il suo marito nei momenti critici, ma questa privazione è Dio che ce l'ha imposta, benedetto sia il nome del Signore! Io sto bene, e questa mattina ho sentito appetito, segno buono. Spero che la presente li trovi ambedue in piena salute, mentre mi segno, pien di stima, la di lei Umilissima serva.

ROSA MADIAI.

ROSA MADIAT a FRANCESCO.

Cella 27. *Ergastolo, Ottobre 23. 1852.*

Se sapeste il piacere che mi recò la notizia che tu stai meglio! fu molto grande, e furono lacrime di gioja che inondarono le mie gote, per dui motivi, primo, che Iddio ti ha fatto degno di soffrire col suo amato figliuolo! il secondo, che Egli ristora la tua salute. O! se sapessimo apprezzare questi avvilimenti che soffriamo per avere confessato, che non v'è che un solo Mediatore fra Dio e gli uomini! Mio caro, tu mi parli che si aspetta la grazia, ma permettimi di dirti, che la gran grazia, l'abbiamo già ricevuta. Quando spezzati i diritti conjugali, la nostra casa, e le cose nostre sparite come la polvere al vento; noi stessi, tu vedi in che stato! E con tutto ciò, non vorremmo, per tutti tesori di Faraone, come Moisè, perdere quel santo seme che lo Spirito Santo ci ha dato, per pura grazia! Questa, io chiamo grazia, e *gran grazia!* Se una stella deve rilucere, sarà la stella di giustizia! Noi non abbiamo fatto male ad alcuno, al contrario, abbiamo ricevuto male, vendendoci per pochi francesconi! una, per una bottega *gratis*; un'altra, per 50 monete! I nostri accusatori sono i discendenti di Giuda. Povere anime! Io prego che Dio gli dia le lagrime di Pietro, ma non la punizione di Giuda; e che un giorno, godano la gloria eterna! E se la povera che è stata comprata, venisse a domandarmi l'elemosina, come gliela feci per settimane scorse, gliela farei ancora, e così ci aiuti Iddio. Amen. Mio caro, siamo pronti a fare la volontà del Padre, come la feci il suo divino Figliuolo, *nostro Maestro*. Non ci tormentiamo; Pietro tremò camminando sulle acque, temendo il flusso del mare, e dimenticò, che se il Salvatore camminava verso di lui sulle medesime acque, non doveva temere; Egli temette, e gridò: "Signore, salvami!" La mano benefica lo soccorse, dicendo, "uomo di poca fede, perchè hai dubitato?" Sì, le onde di questa terra, pur troppo ci fanno temere, ma, a vergogna

nostra ! Rammentiamoci le sacre parole, “ Avvegnachè, io camminassi nella valle dell'ombra della morte, io non temerei male alcuno ; perciocchè tu sei meco, la tua bacchetta, e la tua verga, mi consolerà.” Mio caro, riposati nel Signore, sia per il bene, come per le sofferenze ; malato, come in buona salute ; tutto passa ; l'eternità è l'essenziale. Sta allegro ! e cerca di ristabilirti. Mentre c'è quella cara anima, non ti dare la pena di scrivermi. Lui mi darà tue nuove. Spero di sentire presto che stai bene, mentre ti abbraccio quanto ti amo. Iddio ti benedica, e ti copra sotto le ombre delle sue ali, per la grazia del nostro Signore, Gesù Cristo !

R. M.

ROSA MADIAI al Sig.^r CHAPMAN.

Ott.^{re} 23. 1843, Ergastolo, Cella 27.

RISPETTAB^{mo}. SIGNORE,—Io era giustamente scrivendo, quando un nuovo segno di sua bontà è giunto. Conosco, caro Sig.^o, l'ardente suo desiderio di vederci felici : Dio benedica i cuori benfatti. La ringrazio molto per le premure che lei mi dà per il mio buon marito ; essendo debole, è necessario che si tenga ben caldo ; ma in quanto a me, non ho bisogno di nulla. Ho tanto sofferto, che tutto mi pare un sogno ! mi pare di essere come un pezzo di legno sopra le acque, che la corrente trasporta dove vuole, ma che questo legno ha due occhi fissi in cielo ;, tale è lo stato mio ! Sicchè non s'inquieti per me. Non ho veduto le Sig.^{re} Senhouse, forse veranno la settimana prossima, se piace a Dio.

. . . . Mi perdonerà se scrivo poco, a motivo che ho un forte mal di capo da tre giorni. Vengo di avere la visita dei Signore che furono a Volterra.—Riceva caro Sig.^{re}, le mie sincere riconoscenze, mentre mi segno di lei umil^{ma} serva,

R. MADIAI.

ROSA MADIAT alle Sig.^e SENHOUSE.

Dalla Cella 27, Ottobre. 31. 1852.

NOSTRE RISPETTABILISSIME SIGNORE,—Le loro bontà ci hanno veramente toccato il cuore, sia a me, come al mio marito. Il venire a vederci, non è come al Bargello; là, eravamo vicini, ma qui siamo lontani; uno nell'altezza d'una fortezza, l'altra nell'Ergastolo; ed in conseguenza, distanti dai *viventi*! Il venire domanda molte cose, incomodi, e spese, ed in conseguenza sarebbe indiscretezza incompatibile incoraggiarle in tale scomodo. Ma ciò che i prigionieri del Salvatore domandano è, le ferventi preghiere affinché più le nostre sofferenze aumentano, più lo Spirito di Cristo Gesù ci sia somministrato, e possiamo chinare il capo, e dire, Signore, noi non conosciamo le tue vedute, ma per fede sappiamo, “Che tu gastighi quelli che tu ami, e punisci quelli che ti sono cari.” Sì, care Signore, pregherò che il Signore ci dia quella pace che ha promessa ai suoi, e “quei rivi d'acqua saliente in vita eterna” Vengo di ricevere la visita di Earl Roden, ed è un Signore pieno di Spirito di Dio. Diman l'altro, andrà a Volterra, poi tornerà al suo paese; Dio li accompagni tutti! Care Sig.^e mi approfitterò delle sue offerte; se venissero, mi faranno grazia di portarmi il “Reposo dei Santi,” un piccolo libricino, intitolato, “Venite a Gesù,” il secondo tomo della Storia d'America, che troveranno fra i libri nostri. Vede bene, care Signore, se mi approfitto troppo delle loro bontà: ma i carcerati non possono far nulla da se. Il piacere di vederle mi sarà veramente un gran regalo, ma quante inconvenienze! e le prego di non venire, se non fa buon tempo; Mie buone, buone Signore, io non posso fare altro che debolmente pregare per tante preziose creature, che Iddio le renda felice su questa terra, e gioia nel regno dei viventi; tali sono gli ardenti desideri della prigioniera di Cristo. Che il Padre eterno li audisca. dei sacri meriti del suo

prezioso figlio—così sia. Io non sto bene, ma spero che la presente le troverà in perfetta salute. Piena di stima, mi segno la di loro, umil^{ma} serva,

R. MADIAT.

ROSA MADIAT alle Sig^a. SENHOUSE.

Dalla Cella 27, Nov^{re}. 9. 1852

MIE BUONE E CARE SIGNORE,—Con la presente, sono a ringraziarle delle loro lettere, che ricevetti Sabato, come anche di tutti, tutti gli oggetti che elleno consegnarono al procaccia ; di cui il tutto fu rimesso esattamente Domenica, avendo la loro bontà, che non cessa mai, aggiunto dei biscotti ; essi mi furono grati. Mi rammenta il fatto curioso della nostra seduta, ch' io serbai la chicca che loro altre mi regalarono prima di lasciare Firenze ; e ancorchè la seduta fosse circa due mesi dopo, io serbai la chicca senza mangiarla, per il nostro sostegno di tanti giorni, e tante ore di sofferenze, se pure si possano chiamare sofferenze, ma piuttosto onori, poichè erano gli obbrobri della croce di Cristo. Sicchè, portai la detta chicca, ed un piccolo boccietto piatto con entro un pochino di vino di Marsala, ed un pezzo di cioccolata che aveva ricevuta circa tre mesi prima, dalla Sig^a. C——n, ed essendo il mio marito chiuso anche lì in prigione, ed io in mezzo ai gendarmi ; li pregai che ne dessero al mio marito, per cui, cortesemente glielo portarono ; ma, in vece di essere un solo uccello in gabbia erano due, sicchè, bisogna del poco fare la terza parte, ed il terzo poveretto aveva più bisogno di noi, ed era un certo *Casacci*. Al ritorno dei gendarmi, mi portarono dei biscotti, per cui, quando fummo uniti per comparire dinanzi al tribunale, io domandai al mio marito, chi ti ha dato i biscotti ? e lui mi rispose le Sig^a. Senhouse. Non è egli curioso, che tutti e due, senza saperlo, avessimo fatto il piccolo ripostiglio per la seduta, dei regali delle Sig^a. Senhouse ? e mi

farebbe quasi ridere (se avessi potuto) sicchè loro altre non ce erano, ma c'è era qualche cosa di loro !

Aspetto tutt' i giorni, una lettera dall' uomo di Dio, il Sig.^a Chapman, per sentire come sta il mio marito ; l' ultima che mi scrisse, c' erano buone notizie rapporto alla sua salute, che Dio sia sempre lodato ! Spero che la presente le trovi in perfetta salute. Io, grazia a quell' Iddio che ci sostiene, per l' amore del suo diletto figliuolo, Signor nostro Gesù Cristo, solo appoggio dei miseri mortali ; di quelli che credono, e sperano in Lui, solo Mediatore fra Dio e gli uomini, a cui, collo Spirito Santo, sia lode all' Iddio Onnipotente, all' Iddio forte, e tremendo per chi non osserva la sua parola, a Lui, sia onore, e gloria nei secoli ed in eterno, così sià. Perdoneranno care Signore, di tante, tante pene, che reco loro. Dio solo può pagare tutte le bontà a noi usate. Piena di stima, e di sincera gratitudine, mi segno di loro umilissima serva,

ROSA MADIAT.

ROSA MADIAT alle Sig.^e SENHOUSE.

Dalla mia Cella 27, Nov.^r 17. 1852.

MIE BUONE ED ECCELLENTISSIME SIGNORE,—Poichè il Signore Chapman disse, nella sua del 13, che aveva molte occupazione, io mi dirigo a loro, mie care Signore. Sarà per dare le mie notizie a quell' uomo di Dio, e risparmiare il tempo a lui. Ricevetti anche la di lei cara ed affezionata lettera, con li 3 articoli, di cui loro Signore mi spedirono, e gliene rendo infinite grazie. Essendo il Sig.^a Chapman a Firenze, vorrei che mi pagasse un debito, che ho con il Sig.^a M—— di una boccetta di magnesia, ed 8 carte d' aghi ; il Sig.^a M—— per delicatezza non oserebbe dimandare i suoi denari. C'è anche un altro debito, che il mio marito crede pagato, ma, come si credeva che saremmo sortiti liberi, io non lo feci pagare, sperando che Madiat l'avrebbe pagato con le sue mani ;

dipoi l' ho dimenticato, ed anche questo debito il Sig.^o M—— mi farebbe la grazia di pagare a nome di mio marito; sono 10 fiasche di vino dovute al vinajo Gaetano. Poiche, ogni giorno sortiamo, ma stiamo sempre qui, ed in caso di morte non vorrei andare con denari altrui all' altro mondo; abbiamo abbastanza peccati senza crescere la somma. Come dico, non è stato per non pagare, ma sempre credendo che il mio marito l' avrebbe pagato da se. Io non ho sentito nulla del mio marito, e credendo che il Sig.^o C., fosse a Volterra, scrissi una lettera, ma non ho avuta alcuna risposta, per cui mi sento molto nervosa. Ma oh! “ Donna di poco fede!” Non è il tuo Gesù che lo guarda? Ah! perdona mio Dio la mia debolezza. Sì, mio Gesù, allunga pure, quanto ti piace queste carceri, ma somministra la *forza*;—tutto e dolce con *te*. Spero che la presente le trovi in buona salute. Molti rispetti a chi domanda di noi, io grazie al Signore sto passabilmente bene; per non atteddiarla, piena d'affezione, e di rispetto, passo a segnarmi la di lei umilissima serva,

R. M.

Sono oggi 15 mesi che il mio marito è prigionero di Cristo! che Dio lo benedica e lo santifichi nel suo sacro figliuolo. Amen. Molti e molti ringraziamenti a loro, per avere scritto alla famiglia Cumming.

ROSA alle Signore SENHOUSE.

23 Novembre, 1852.

CARE SIGNORE,—Non sapendo l'indirizzo del Sig.^o Chapman indirizzo a loro, per far sapere al Sig. C., ch'io desidero che il mio marito abbia un professore per esaminarlo, sia per sua consolazione, come per la mia. Ciò il Governo non può recusare. Di più, se si deve fare una visita a me, ed una al mio marito, se potesse ottenere che le due visite fossero

fatte al mio marito, e non e me. Di più, se il Sig.^o C. mi facesse la carità di andare per qualche giorni a Volterra, a far sapere al mio marito, ch'egli è a Volterra, e che andrà tutt'i giorni a domandare delle sue notizie; e non potendo il mio marito scrivere, secondo le notizie che riceverà per parte del Sig.^o Direttore, potrà farmela sapere. Perdonerà tanta libertà, ma poichè mi è impossibile di far niente per il mio buon marito, qualche anima di Dio abbia pietà di noi. Pregheranno per i poveri carcerati, che quanto più le affezioni crescono, tanto più la loro fede sia fortificata.—La sua umil^{ma} serva

R. MADIAT.

FRANCESCO al Sig.^o CHAPMAN.

2 Dicembre 1852.

ONOREVOLISSIMO SIGNORE,—Rispondo alla di lei lettera del 22, e mi confonde la tanta di lei bontà che ha per me, e per la mia povera afflitta moglie, e poichè lei è tanto buono a prendersi pena, godera ancora &c., &c. Quanto a me, sto un pochino meglio, ma l'avvenire è nelle mani di Dio! ed a lui mi raccomando giorno e notte con preghiere fervorose, e molte volte con lagrime agli occhi; ed imploro misericordia, e grazia a volermi dare pazienza nella sofferenza, l'umiliazione, e sommissione, e sottomissione a tutt' i suoi santi voleri. Io prego per me, e per mia moglie, per i fratelli in Cristo Gesù, ed in generale che Iddio mandi le benedizioni le più preziose su tutti loro, e su tutte le loro famiglie, da ora in eterno, e così sia. I miei rispetti al suo Sig.^{ro} figlio, ed a tutti gli amici. Altro non mi resta dirle che salutandola caramente. Il suo servo fidele in Cristo Gesù,

FRANCESCO MADIAT.

FRANCESCO alla Signora SENHOUSE.

Volterra, 10 Gennajo, 1853.

RISPELLAB^{ma}. SIGNORA,—Rispondo alla di lei lettera a me tanto cara, e mi umilio verso di V^{ra}. Sig^{ria}. e con tutt'i rispetti per la sua nobiltà, ma come sorella in Cristo Gesù, mi prendo la libertà di scrivere queste due righe. In prima, le dirò ch'io sto sempre al solito, ma piuttosto meglio che peggio; e l'avvenire sta in mano di Dio. Il mio spirito è calmo, e fermo, come la casa impiantata sullo scoglio; io non ho nessuno odio al mondo, e ho abbandonato il mondo, e mi sento tutto separato; ho rimesso tutto nella santa volontà di Dio, fino al sacrificio della mia carne, ch'è il più grande di tutt'i sacrifici. In quanto a mia moglie mi dispiace che senta tanto dolore per me, ma lei sa che bisogna "abbandonare marito, moglie, padre, madre," &c., &c. Questo la deve rallegrare, ch'io soffro volentieri per il santo nome di Dio, Padre del nostro Signore Gesù Cristo, nostro Salvatore ed unico Mediatore fra Dio e gli uomini,—Cristo Gesù venuto in carne, e nato della Virgine Maria, e morta in croce per redimere da tutti i peccati a tutti quelli che crederanno in Lui, e gli domanderanno perdono di vero cuore; e così sia. Quando vanno a Lucca, le prego di farla leggere alla mia povera afflitta moglie, e le dicano tante cose da parte mia. Io saluto i Signori Chapman, e tutt'i miei conoscenti con i miei alti rispetti, augurandoli le benedizioni le più preziosi, tanto spirituali, come temporali e che la pace di Dio scenda sopra di loro, e su le loro famiglie, e parenti, come il lucignolo fumante della Gerusalemme terrestre che non si spegne mai. Amen. Se io non rispondo alle lettere di V^{ra}. Sig^{ria}. o del Sig. C., è segno che sto peggio; fino che sto così, gli risponderò. Altro non mi resta dirle, e mi umilio con i più alti rispetti, tanto a lei, come alla Signora sua Cugina, il suo aff^{mo}. servo fidele, e fratello in Cristo Salvatore nostro, e così sia.

FRANCESCO MADIAT.

ROSA MADIAT ad un' AMICA.

6 Gen. 1853, alle 8 della sera;
il lume si spenge.

Sto scrivendo fra i pianti e i lamenti di una povera infelice che sono 15 giorni che soffre con febbre e dolore dalla parte del cuore; il Dottore ci va tutti i giorni, e non le fa niente. Già ebbi anch' io che dire con il Dottore medesimo per la sua poca attenzione; se dovessi raccontar tutto, ci vorrebbe un foglio del giornale inglese, ma in brevi parole gli dissi dopo essermi lamentata della sua poca attenzione, che io sapeva che dicendo la verità si tirava inimicizia; ma io amava più parlare in faccia che dietro alle persone. Egli rimase sorpreso, ed ora è più cortese, ma non più pronto a curare la malattia, poichè—il tempo la porta, e la pazienza deve *levarla!* . . .

Ebbi Lunedì una battaglia con il Confessore delle Suore sopra la religione, e durò circa un'ora $\frac{1}{2}$, o due.

Principiammo da Napoleone che fa cose straordinarie, prodigi! Ama il Papa, sostiene i Vescovi, ha fatto restaurare la Chiesa di *S^{ta} Genéviève*, e tante altre bellissime cose; che Iddio lo ha mandato. Io per dir qualche cosa, parlai del Duca di Wellington, cioè del suo funerale. Egli mi domandò se era Cattolico; per tagliare a corto risposi: "non lo so!"

Egli.—Se non era Cattolico, senza la Santa Madre Chiesa tutto è perduto!

A tal risposta io soggiunsi che chi è battezzato nel nome del Padre, &c., e crede nel sacro lavacro di Cristo, di certo è salvato.

Egli.—No, chi non tiene alla santità, ed al potere della sede Papale non può salvarsi!

Io.—Ma S. Paolo disse; "crede nel Signore Gesù e sei salvato!" e di dove tiene tanta autorità il Papa?

Egli.—Da Pietro, poichè Pietro è la pietra fondamentale della Chiesa.

Io.—Quante pietre vi sono, una o due?

Egli non mi rispose ; io soggiunsi. Gesù Cristo disse ai Farisei ;—“ Non avete letto che la pietra dagli edificatori rigettata, è divenuta capo del cantone ; e tutti quelli che cadranno su quella pietra saranno tritati ? e questa pietra è *Cristo*.”

Alla parola *tritati* parve restar sorpreso ! ma soggiunse—Cristo, mentre era in terra ; ma quando era per tornare in cielo stabili Pietro in luogo suo. “ Pietro, a chi avrai rimessi i peccati, io lo rimetterò : tu sei Pietro, e su questa,” ecc., e lo mise in luogo suo.

Io.—Non conosco altro Dio in terra che Gesù Cristo, e non ci sarà altro Dio in terra finchè tornerà ; che Iddio sia in cielo, in terra, e in ogni luogo per la possanza del suo Spirito, lo credo.

Egli.—(Levandosi il berretto) E nel santissimo sacramento dell'altare.

Io mi chetai a quella parola, altrimenti dal penitenziale si passa al Sant Ufizio. Ma soggiunsi che se Cristo si dicesse a Pietro, lo fece sulla *fede* di Pietro ; e il potere che diede a Pietro, lo dette anche agli altri.

Egli.—No : disse *in* Pietro, e non nella *fede* ! Pietro era capo dei suoi fratelli.

Io.—Ma non disse a tutti, “ *andate* ? ”

Egli.—Sì : ma quello fu dopo.

Io.—Come adunque il muro della città aveva dodici fondamenti, sui quali vi erano i 12 nomi degli Apostoli dell'Ag-nello ? In quei muri non vi erano distinzioni. Perchè il Papa fa tante distinzioni ?

Egli.—Avendo la discendenza di Pietro, e come nel posto suo, poichè Iddio lo mise al suo posto.

Io.—Ma come può un uomo imperfetto stare in luogo di Dio ? Pietro, che non solo mancò quando era in terra il suo Maestro, ma anche dopo ; poichè Paolo dice “ Io gli resistei in faccia, giacchè era da *riprendersi*.”

Egli.—Dove dice così ?

Io.—Non mi rammento il luogo : ma non solo gli resiste

in faccia sua, ma in faccia di tutti quelli che erano *con lui*. Di più : dov'è la Chiesa di Cristo ? Iddio che è tutto amore, che dette la sua vita per salvare il *mondo*. Che cosa fa la Chiesa pretendendo imitar Cristo e Pietro ? Si vendica dando a chi la prigionia, a chi il Sant' Ufizio, sepolti vivi. E questa la carità di Cristo ?

Egli.—Ci sono molte menzogne !

Io.—Le inquisizioni non sono state levate ai tempi nostri ?

Egli.—La Chiesa richiama : se quello non basta, bisogna punire per vedere di richiamarli.

Io.—Bella maniera, gastigando severamente fino a murar vivi gl'infelici per farli morire arrabbiati ! Iddio ha dato libero pensare a tutti, e l'uomo vuol toglierlo.

Egli.—La Chiesa non ha mai punite nessuno per il pensiero, ma solamente per il proselitismo ; digià in Inghilterra vi sono duchi, lordi, e molti che vengono a noi ; e poi l'Inghilterra verrà a noi tutta.

Io.—Allora crederò che sià veramente la fine del mondo, poichè è detto che molti apostateranno dalla fede. Soggiungisi : La mia sola salvezione la riconosco unicamente nel sacro lavacro di Gesù Cristo.

Egli.—Santo Padre Pietro !

Io.—Avrò tutti i difetti, meno l'ipocrisia ; io credo alla Vergine, ai Santi ; li ammiro perchè hanno ben corrisposto alle grazie che Iddio ha loro conferite. Posso anche dire che ho pianto pensando ai dolori della Vergine—quella spada predetta, ed essa come umil serva stava in silenzio senza lamentarsi, tutto soffriva : e prego Iddio che mi faccia imitare una tanta rassegnazione ; ma non prego nè lei, nè i Santi ; solamente il Mediatore fra Dio e gli uomini. Allora vi fu un nuovo attacco che ci sarebbe da farne un libro. Sono circa le undici, si spegne il lume, la mano ed il dorso non ne possono più : buona notte !

R. M.

FRANCESCO MADIÀI al Sig.^a CHAPMAN.

Volterra, Gen.^o 25. 1853.

STIM.^{mo}. PADRE IN GESU CRISTO,—Prendo la libertà di chiararla Padre, non pei meriti, perchè noi non li abbiamo, ma per la grazia che ha ricevuto da Dio, Padre del nostro Signore Gesù Cristo, di avere tanta carità per due poveri afflitti, che gemono in catene, e mali quasi insoffribili; e il tutto, per il santo nome di Dio, e senza odio di parte, e il tutto è rimesso nella sua santa volontà.

La ringrazio molto, per il dolce, che ella mi aveva mandato, e molto più le autorità superiori, che lo permettevano. . . . Mi dispiace che la mia povera moglie non sta bene, ma ci vuole pazienza. Io la prego per il nom di Gesù Cristo, a volere stare allegra, almeno quando ella sta bene, e di non pensare a me; io spero nella misericordia del Signore Gesù Cristo, che mandava l'Angelo della consolazione sopra di me, ogni qual volta che io invoco il suo santo nome, e sento in me lo spirito tanto forte, che amo più presto morire, che cedere alla santa parola di Dio, e come peccatore dico come S. Paolo, "Anzi pure ancora riputo tutti queste cose esser danno, per l'eccellenza della conoscenza di Cristo Gesù, mio Signore," &c.

Parlo dei nostri accusatori, che per le loro false testimonianze credevano che ci tenessimo più alla nostra bella casa mobiliata, dicendo, "Questi sono belli e presi a laccio," ma, loro non sapevano, che le nostre convinzioni, non erano venute da vendetta di parte, ma da uno spirito di amore verso Dio, e verso il nostro prossimo, e da un convincimento di profondo cuore.

La prego di fare i miei più alti rispetti alle Sig.^e. Senhouse, e le ringrazio per le calde preghiere che fanno per me, come anche il Sig.^a—, e tutt'i fratelli in Gesù Cristo—prego anche per me, e per la mia povera moglie, e per tutti, che Dio voglia spargere le sue benedizioni su tutti, come Lui fa

risplendere il sole sui buoni, ed i cattivi, e che Lui dia la pace, e custodisca le anime loro, da ora, in eterno,—Così sia, il suo figlio in Cristo, e servo fedele,

F. MADIAT.

Mi scordava di dirle, che il mio capo vagella, ma tutto sia fatto secondo la santa volontà di Dio per ora,—è solo la notte, e poi lo vedrò ! Amen.

FRANCESCO MADIAT alla Sig.^a S. SENHOUSE.

Volterra, Gennaio 30. 1853.

Sono con i più alti rispetti, umiliato avanti a V.^{ra} S.^{ria} per la loro bontà, e simpatia che hanno verso di un povero afflitto, e molto malato, battuto, ma non vinto dal male ; e rispondo alla sua cara lettera (in data 27), con i più distinti ringraziamenti : ho tutto bene inteso, e sono sodisfattissimo. Quanto a me, sto sempre lo stesso. Il Sig.^{ro} Dottore mi dice, che comincio a star meglio, e che presto guarirò, ma per adesso, la mia testa vagella, perciò non posso mettere in carte, come vorrei ; ma pazienza, la volontà di Dio sia fatta ! La prego di fare tanti saluti alla mia povera afflitta moglie, e le dica, che io, come peccatore, tengo in cuore sempre le parole della Santa Scrittura, e S. Paulo diceva, “ Che non si aspettava altro, che catene e tribolazioni,” ed io aggiungerò, che in quei tempi, non solo nelle piazze, ma ancora nelle sinagoghe predicarono il Vangelo del nostro Signore Gesù Cristo, ch'è la morale che ha dato per la nostra salvazione ; e noi troviamoci in casa con alcune persone evangeliche, troviamoci ora in carcere, cose dure ! ma pazienza ! La volontà di Dio sia fatta ! Ho ricevuto il dolce che mi mandò il mio caro Padre in Gesù Cristo, il Sig Chapman, lo ringrazio tanto, tanto,—Lascio, perchè mi fatico, e se non rispondo alle lettere, è segno che non posso. I miei più distinti rispetti a tutti gli amici e fratelli in Cristo Gesù, e

mando loro la pace, come Iddio la dà, e la conoscenza della santa parola, e la pratica della medesima, con fervorose preghiere, per il nostro Salvatore Gesù Cristo, così sia.—Il suo servo fedele, e fratello in Cristo Gesù.

F. MADIAT.

ROSA MADIAT alle Sig.^{re} SENHOUSE.

Ergastolo, Feb.^{le} 2. 1853.

MIE CARISSIME, E BUONE SIGNORE,—Spero che saranno tornato, “to the comfortable home,” senza inconvenienze, ed infreddature, specialmente la cara Sig.^{ra} Sarah, con la sua salute delicata, che dimentica se per me. Ma Iddio è giusto, e nella sua santità infinita, ricompenserà tante pene e carità, che di cuore, elleno fanno ai suoi prigionieri.

Io rinunzio all'uccello, poichè sarebbe troppo rumoroso per me, ma credo che sarebbe molto divertente per il mio Madiat. Io lavoro, e posso passare il tempo, ma egli non ha niente che lo svaghi per un solo minuto; la sua posizione è molto più dura della mia; sicchè, vorrei che avessero la bontà di fargli comprare o un Cardellino, o un Pettiroso, che sono molto bellini, ed anche spiritosi.

Il più necessario è, di provvenderlo di molti semi, per il povero nuovo prigioniero di Volterra; non che io creda che a Volterra, possa mancare il vitto per gli uccelli, ma se la fortezza è distante dalla città, potrebbe mancare il tempo per farlo procurare. Il Signor Chapman mi farà grazia di darglielo in nome mio; se Madiat facesse difficoltà di accettarlo, il Sig.^{ro} C., gli suggerirà che Silvio Pellico amava la compagnia di un ragno, e di una mosca, tanto più deve essere grato un uccellino! che quando la finestra è serrata, ed aprendogli la gabbia, e mettendogli sulla panca vicino, l'uccello gli si avvicinerà molto affezionato; e che accettando l'uccello sarà una cosa piacevole anche per me, sapendo che egli ha qualche cosa vivente nella sua cella.

Mille cose affettuose al Sig. C., ed anche il suo buon figliuolo ; prego il Sig. C. di abbracciare, da parte mia mio caro marito. E' una commissione curiosa per un Signore Inglese, che non abbraccia mai i loro propri amici, non è vero ? e tanto meno gli stranieri, e quelli che sono da meno di loro ; ma sì, che ai morenti gli si accorda ciò che desiderano, così si osservano meno le debolezze dei carcerati.

Le prego, care Sig.^{te} di dare i miei rispetti a tutti quelli che dimandano di noi, non dimenticando l'infermo. Per non abusare della loro pazienza termino, abbracciandole quanto le amo ; perdoneranno l'espressione familiare con cui mi esprimo ; no, non è per mancanza di rispetto ; pur troppo conosco con chi parlo ; ma, è un'espressione che sorte dal cuore riconoscente per tante pene, che elleno si danno per noi ; e siccome Gesù non respinse dal sacro suo seno il capo di S. Giovanni, così, spero che elleno non si sdegheranno per ciò. Le cose che mi portarono sono troppo buone, ora vengo di mangiare un pezzo della eccellente chicca, e mi ci sarei rifatta la seconda volta, se la temperanza non mi avesse detto, "*basta*," e se basta di mangiare la chicca, basta anche di scrivere.

Passo a segnarmi, la di loro umil^{ma}, e dev^{ma}. serva.

ROSA MADIAT.

CONFERENZA fra me e la Superiorea.

Lucca, 6 Feb.^o 1853, dall'Ergastolo.

Ieri 5, dopo desinare, entrò nella mia cella la Superiorea, ed aveva l'aria come se avesse qualche cosa da dirmi, ma non sapesse di dove cominciare. Io credeva una sgridata per avere offerto tabacco ad una povera carecrata che non ne aveva, avendone già ricevuto rimprovero le sera avanti dalla Sorella della Superiorea ; poichè non è permesso che le carcerate si parlino, sicchè mi era già preparata per questo ; ma

fu tutto l'opposto,—anzi incominciammo con gran compimenti.

Mi dimandò se il Sig.^r Chapman era Evangelico ?

Io.—Si.

La Sup.—Ed anche la sua famiglia ?

Io.—Si.

La Sup.—E i vostri parenti sono tutti Cattolici Romani ?

Io.—Tutti.

La Sup.—E quanto tempo è che avete cambiato, poichè anche voi eravate della stessa religione, non è vero ?

Io.—Della stessa, ed anche molto bizzocca.

La Sup.—Che vuol dire bizzocca ?

Io.—Molto portata alla religione.

La Sup.—Come fu che cambiaste ?

Io.—Per gli scandali della Chiesa : e le raccontai tutto ciò che io aveva veduto quando andavo a pregare, talmentechè qualche volta non sapeva si doveva o restare, o andarmene ; mio marito era nella stessa mia condizione. Erano 8 anni circa che leggevamo il Vangelo, ma si andava alla Chiesa nativa ; si non che per i detti disordini, senza però lasciare la nostra Chiesa, incominciammo ad andare alla Chiesa evangelica per vedere se si trovava più pace, e difatti lì ritrovammo il vero rispetto cristiano. Allora fummo più attenti alla santa lettura della Bibbia, e pregando Iddio che ci illuminasse per sua grazia c'ispirò di tenerci alla sua santa parola.

La Sup.—Poichè l'amavate, spero che ritornirete nella vostra primaria Chiesa ?

Io.—Se ciò fosse stato fatto per capriccio o interesse, sì ; ma ciò ch'è fatto in buona coscienza non si cambia.

La Sup.—Il vostro marito scrisse nell'ultima lettera (il Direttore me la lesse) che era ben fermo ; che voi gli avevate detto qualche cosa ?

Io.—Non me rammento ciò che gli scrissi, ma egli lo ha fatto in buona coscienza, come me.

Allora la Superiora mi pregò accettare una medaglia di “Maria concetta senza peccato,” infilata ad un cordoncino da mettersi al collo, giacchè ne aveva fatto regalo a tutte le carcerate. Io presi la medaglia cortesemente, dicendole che era molto buona di pensare a me ; e, se permetteva, l'avrei data in regalo alla sorella di Madiari, poichè le aveva dato le mie reliquie quando cambiai di religione.

La Sup.—Tenete questa per voi, e ve ne darò un'altra per la vostra cognata ?

Io.—Non porto immagini da poi che ho studiato il secondo comandamento di Dio : “ *Non farti immagine alcuna,*” e non v'è sbaglio poichè dice “delle cose che sono in cielo di sopra.” Non si può dire—ma sono così sante, ed è permesso—no. Egli ha spiegato—“ *in cielo di sopra.*”

La Sup.—Ma Gesù ama la sua madre, non è vero ?

Io.—Di certo ; ed era sottomesso ai suoi parenti secondo la carne.

La Sup.—Gesù stesso dice chi vuol grazie trovi il mezzo ; cercate presso mia madre.

Io.—La Chiesa dice questo ; ma Gesù dice, “ *Venite a me.*” Ed io leggo nella S. Parola “ *Niuno viene a me, se non che il Padre, che mi ha mandato, l'attragga.*” Sicchè si parla di Padre e non di madre.

La Sup.—Ma Maria ha fatto tanti bei miracoli, e ne abbiamo l'esperienza.

Io.—Gesù diede il potere ai suoi discepoli di far miracoli, e mai a sua madre ; e quando con dolcezza Maria disse : “ *Figliuolo, non hanno vino !*” Gesù rispose : “ *Che v'è fra te e me, o donna ? L'ora mia non è ancora venuta.*” E quell'ora doveva venire dal cielo e non dalla terra.

La Sup.—Ma voi non disprezzate la Madonna e i Santi ?

Io.—Dio mi guardi ; io li ammiro, e prego il Signore mi faccia imitare quelle anime belle, alle quali Iddio somministrò tante belle grazie, e loro le seppero metter bene a profitto.

La Sup.—Dunque voi credete che abbiano del merito ?

Io.—Merito in quanto al profitto, sì ; poichè il servo dice “ Signore, tu mi desti in mano cinque talenti, ecco, sopra quelli n’ho guadagnati altri cinque.” E il Signore rispose : “ uono e fedel servitore, io ti costituirò sopra molte cose.” Ma S. Paolo dice : “ Per grazia siete stati salvati mediante la fede, e questo non viene da voi, imperciocchè è dono di Dio. Non in virtù delle opere, affinchè nessuno si glori ! ”

La Sup.—Ma la Vergine era prediletta.

Io.—Era detto, la Vergine partorirà, ma non da chi. Ciò era nella mente di Dio, e tutti i salvati sono prediletti poichè Gesù dice, “ senza di me non potete far nulla.”

La Sup.—Ma Gesù diede il potere alla Chiesa, e chi non ascolta la Chiesa, manca a Dio, essendo il suo ordine.

Io.—Se io attengo a Gesù, non posso mancare in quanto alla sua Parola, non già che io sia pervenuta alla perfezione di non mancare, giacchè Paolo dice : “ Non che sia pervenuto alla perfezione, ma una cosa fo, che lasciando il passato addietro, corro avanti per vedere se posso ottenere il palio.” E se un tanto servo diceva così, quanto più devo io cercare i lumi per andare avanti ?

La Sup.—Spero che Iddio vi darà questo lume.

Io.—Per ciò prego.

La Sup.—Ditemi, non avete mai sentiti rimorsi di coscienza da quando avete lasciato la vostra Chiesa ?

Io.—No.

La Sup.—Voglio dire agitata ?

Io.—Anzi ho sentito molto più pace.

La Sup.—Quando fosse così, se voi aveste la ragione, andrebbe male per noi.

Io.—Dio nella sua infinita sapienza giudicherà. Ma è detto, “ a chi sarà più dato, sarà più dimandato.” Gesù dice, “ Io son la porta, chi non entra per la porta, esso è rubatore e ladrone.” Sicchè se ne andò essa di buon umore, e di lì a poco tornò, portandomi 4 arance, e 2 limoni, pregandomi accettarli in regalo.

Appunti d'una Conversazione.

Già due altre volte una suora mi ha fatto molte dimande, e rispondendomi mi disse, che loro avevano più vantaggio di me, poichè Iddio disse “a cui voi avrete rimessi i peccati, saranno rimessi.” Io.—Ma se il confessore rimette, e Dio no, allora che si fa? E infine ci furono molti ragionamenti anche lì. Io non so se lo fanno di loro volontà, oppure se sono istruite per parte di *qualcheduno*. Fra poco mi aspetto un altro attacco col frate; ma lo Spirito Santo risponderà per me. Pregherò per i poveri carcerati, giacchè siamo bambini di pochi giorni, e non solo non abbiamo gustato il cibo sodo, ma anche abbiamo preso poco latte! Ma certo Iddio non lascerà la sua opera imperfetta.

ROSA MADIAT alla Sig^{ra}. C.—.

Lucca, dall'Ergastolo, 20th Feb. 1853.

CARA SIG^{RA} TERESA C.—C'è già uno sbaglio al principio della lettera, ma perdonerò tutti gli sbagli che ci troverà, poichè ho un gran male di capo, cagionato dalla spina, e dai nervi. Ho sofferto molto il giorno 17—giorno dell'impri-gionamento del mio caro marito! eh, bisogna esser moglie per poter compatire le mie *afflizioni*. Sì, mio buon Gesù! io so che tu l'affliggi per santificarlo; è grazia—e grazia grande; rendi lo capace di onorarti in tutto da vero servo fedele; e fa che la sua moglie diventando più ragionevole e più cristiana, non cessi mai di lodare e benedire il tuo santo nome. *Amen*. Cara Signorina, io la ringrazio del suo buon *souvenir*, e di pregar per noi. Non cessi, non cessi di presentare vieppiù le sue orazioni al trono di grazia, affinchè per l'unzione dello Spirito Santo siamo vieppiù fortificati per la grande impresa a cui Iddio si è degnato *chiamarci*.

Sto scrivendo fra le “*requiem eternae*” ed il “*tantum ergo*” dei Frati, colle Monache, e le Carcerate ; e per guarire il mio dolor di capo vi si aggiunge un grand odor d’incenso, per cui—ancorchè sia freddo,—mi tocca aprire il mio lucernario.

Cara Signorina ! Ella dice che le mie preghiere montano molto alto ! Ah, è bene al contrario. . . . se Iddio non porgesse, nella sua carità, il suo orecchio alla mia bocca, non potrebbe intenderle, perciocchè il peso delle mie debolezze le farebbe cader più presto a terra, che montare al cielo. Ma buon per me, che ho a fare col Padre di quel Figliuolo che ha fatto tutto per *me*. Lascio per ora: se questa sera potrò, le racconterò qualche cosa.

Riprendo il mio discorso : deve sapere che il giorno che le SS^{re}. Senhouse vennero a farmi visita, circa tre quarti d’ora dopo partite, impazzò una Carcerata, e i suoi gridi durarono fino alle 2 dopo mezzanotte, due porte distanti dalla mia. Alle 5 ricominciò ad urlare, e a dire mille cose curiose ; la mattina quando si fa pulizia, mi fu aperta la porta, ed io sortii per metter fuori gli oggetti. In quel tempo la povera matta gridava : “mi voglio confessare.” Io aveva in mano la granata, spazzando dinanzi alla mia cella, quando la matta gridò : “si dice il peccato, ma non il peccatore !”

Questa parola mi mise in curiosità, ed essendo una cella aperta, le Monache non mi videro ; ed io fingendo spolverare la mia porta, ascoltava il discorso della infelice matta ; ed eccolo qui.

“Si : mi voglio confessare dei fatti miei, e non di quelli degli altri. Si : e sapete che mi fece un confessore ? Io mi confessai, ed egli mi dimandò il nome dell’uomo ; io gli dissi, non voglio dire il suo nome ; io dico il peccato, ma non il peccatore. Ma egli mi rispose : ditemi il suo nome, affinchè possiate aver l’assoluzione tutti e due. A queste parole io gli dissi il nome. Sapete che fece ? Lo mandò tre mesi in carcere ! . . . Ah ! io non voglio dire i nomi : i peccati sì, ma i nomi—no, no, no.”

Io entrai nella mia Cella ridendo, e dissi : questo discorso è da savio, non da matto. *E quanti infelici si trovano in prigione per la santa confessione !*

Tutta questa settimana è stata tremenda qui. Accanto alla detta matta, vi è uno, che già dette in pazzia quando io era al Bargello, e Venerdì principiò a quìstionare con l'infelice sunnominata. Un altro ha la pazzia del pianto ; un terzo vede cose belle. Un altro, in certi giorni, non fa che leticare da tanto si secca, fino che va a letto, ed anche a letto fa il simile, e questo sta muro a muro con me ; e appena si leva, picchia al muro, e fa tonfi per terra. Un altro, che tesse i nastri, ha la passione di far girare il suo telajo diverse volte per la sua cella ; e quei piombi fanno tanto rumore, che ho dovuto lamentarmene colle Monache. Il medesimo venerdì, una di quelle ragazze di cattiva condotta si fece aprire con una scusa, e non voleva più rientrare ; quando si vide forzata da 6 Monache, si gettò per terra : le Monache furono costrette di strascinarla dentro ; allora urlì tremendi. Prese le cisoje per dare addosso alle Monache : in quel frattempo chiusero la porta, e quando essa vide la porta chiusa, rimbombarono le due corsie dai calci, e dalle grida che mandava. C'è una poverina morente in letto, che si lamenta dei gridi di quella povera matta ; io mi sentiva struggere per lei. La sera la matta fuggì, trovandosi sola, ed avevano, senza avvedersene, lasciata la porta senza fermarla. Io stava prendendo il tè, e la mia porta era semi-aperta, tutte le altre chiuse, e tutte le Monache in coro. Grazie a Dio, la povera fuggì dalla parte delle Monache, che se veniva da me, io sarei morta di *paura*. In fine, se si dovesse raccontar ciò che segue qui in qualche giorno, o anche la notte, si vedrebbe esser pochi i giorni che si passano tranquillamente, oltre le proprie pene, che già non son *poche*.

Spero che il mio povero marito non avrà sofferto per tanti inconvenienti ; avendo la sua salute tanto sofferto, ed il capo tanto indebolito, li sentirebbe molto più di me. Cara Signorina, se può leggere questa lettera sarà brava davvero ;

ma non posso far di meglio ; vi ho messo tutto il mio talento, tutta la mia forza. Sicchè non si stanchi di pregare per noi. Riceva le assicurazioni di affezione sincera della sua
- Umil^{ma}. Serva.,

ROSA MADIAL.

THE END.

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